



THE BARQUEE FUTURE
OR
LIFE IN THE FAR NORTH.



BY JONAS LIE

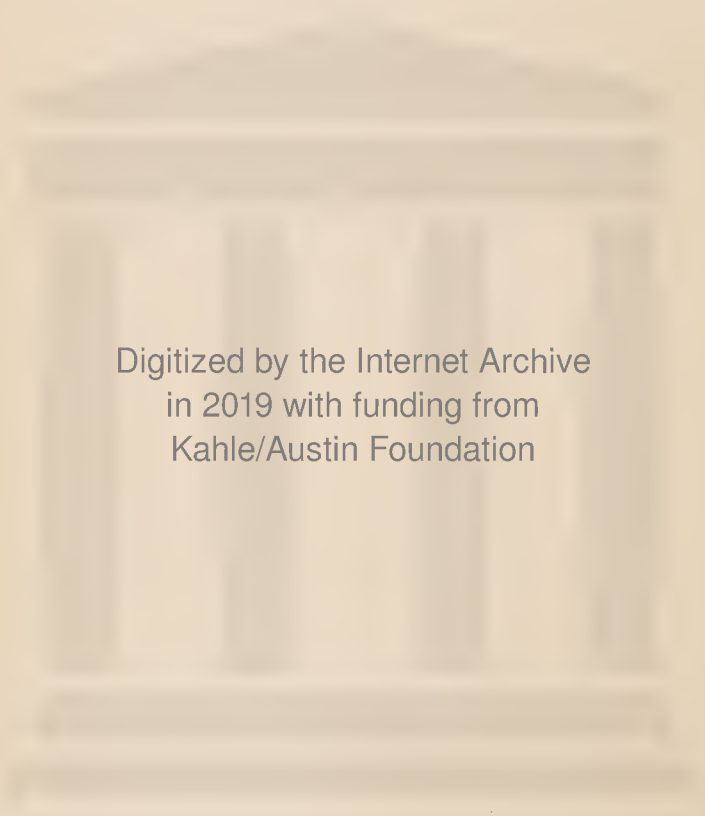
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THE BARQUE FUTURE;

OR,

LIFE IN THE FAR NORTH.

BY

JONAS LIE.

TRANSLATED BY MRS. OLE BULL.

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PREFACE.

“THE PILOT AND HIS WIFE,” of Jonas Lie, was so favorably received by the press and public, that I have but one regret in presenting “The Barque Future,”—that it puts in so late an appearance.

Constant travel has prevented regular work; but two summers having been spent in Norway, I trust the present translation will do better justice to the original than did my first attempt.

“Den Fremsynte” (The Man of Second-Sight) will follow the present volume.

I have again to acknowledge with gratitude the kind assistance of Professor R. B. ANDERSON, of the University of Wisconsin, by whom the verses in this story have been translated.

SARA C. BULL.

NEW YORK, January 7, 1879.

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THE BARQUE FUTURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE WRECK.

IT was after one of the terrific November storms of 1807—a marked year in the youthful reminiscence of many an old seaman—that the barque *Future*, one snowy winter day, lay drifting, a mastless wreck, outside the coast of Finmark. The bulwarks were broken in, and she lay keeled on one side half filled with water.

The barque belonged to one of the Copenhagen companies owning warehouses in Varangerfjord, and was bound for Kollefjord. Outside of Thronthjem harbor, being overtaken by a land-storm, she had been compelled to put to sea, and for days the ocean had surged about the *Future* in mountains of foam and breakers as high as her cross-trees. Down in the trough of the sea she lay, the four green wave-walls about her, and a bit of gray storm-sky above her for a roof, until the crest of a wave again lifted her crew up to the dreary outlook of her surroundings. Her captain had been struck by the boom one night: he

lay unconscious, struggling with death, and the vessel — defenseless and without a commander, as she lay with her timbers creaking in the breakers — sprang a leak in several places. On the fourth day, when the storm had lulled somewhat, and they believed they had glimpses of land, the crew, who found that they were unable longer to keep her free from water with the pumps, resolved, if possible, to save themselves by taking to the life-boat and gaining some spot on the coast.

The sick captain had already been lowered into the boat, and there remained on board only his little child and wife. She had as yet been unable to overcome her fright at the dangerous descent, when a threatening breaker compelled those below to push off.

Shortly after, the boat sank before her very eyes.

It was the second day after the loss of the life-boat that the wreck lay drifting in a thick, heavy snow-storm, off that desolate northern rock-coast. The storm had calmed, leaving only the ground-swell.

On the cabin stairs, under the hatches, sat a deathly pale, fair-haired woman, with a child in her lap, which she, in a half-unconscious doze, rocked to and fro, and now and then, with a nervous pressure, convulsively clasped to her breast.

She was young, and, before death set his seal upon her, must have been handsome; at least this was indicated by her large, deep eyes, which, feebly ques-

tioning, with the remnant of her life-force, she raised to a young man who just then pressed past her up the stairs, with a brownish-red wallet in his hand. It was a pocket-book, the property of the company and of her husband, which the latter was to have used to trade with in Kollefjord. Just before, she had dreamed that an ugly old man, in heavy clothes, stood above her in the snow-covered round-house, looking down upon her as if deliberating what to do, now and then raising an ax, which lay beside him, and then, irresolutely, dropping it. He saw that she was dying.

Meanwhile there was a third person farther forward on deck, completely absorbed in what he was doing. He was past middle age, a sea Finn, the only inhabitant of the small remote island called Lov-isle. He had piled a sail, a boat-hook, a copper kettle, with some other things which he had found on deck, in a heap over by the remaining bulwarks, and came aft just at the moment that the young man delivered the pocket-book to the elder one. A greedy look passed over the Finn's face, but this expression immediately changed to one of terror,—his eye had fallen upon the young woman as she sat with her child on the cabin stairs.

While the two others went down into the hold and set to work scuttling the ship, which was half filled with water, the sea Finn was behaving most strangely

on deck. He turned about every time he approached the round-house, but nevertheless returned to it again and again. He busied himself for some time with his pile of things, but they were soon stowed in the boat. As he judged they were nearly through with the chopping below, his gait became more uncertain, his turns shorter and shorter, and he walked almost on tiptoe. Thus it continued, with some interruptions, for an hour — perhaps an hour and a half; but when the chopping finally began to slacken, the Finn's small, wrinkled, yellow face was pale, and covered with beads of perspiration. He had surely worked harder during this time than the two below in the hold. With a sudden determination he now strode aft to the hatchway. There sat the young woman, half buried in snow, with staring eyes, but the child still lived. The mother held it in her lap, as before, under her cloak, and she still clasped it in her folded but now stiffened arms.

Isak took it carefully up in his two large, caloused hands, and stood for a time evidently puzzled with his prize: he looked about as if at his wits' end; but, as it was evident that no help was to be expected of any one there, with his burden still in his hands he carefully seated himself on the deck — then, with some difficulty, drew off one of his heavy sea-boots, put the child into it, and carried it by the straps, hopping on his stocking-foot across the slop-

ing deck to the rail where his boat lay. With his burden still in his hand he carefully descended, laid the sea-boot in the stern, back of the rear seat, throwing his coarse woolen jacket over it, and then sat waiting for the two others to come.

It was not until after the boat was pushed off that the latter observed what Isak had finally rescued from the vessel, and the look of the elder was anything but mild; but there sat Isak, stout and broad-shouldered, over in the stern,—besides, the thing was done now. The two others in the boat were Corporal Stuwitz and his son. As to the former, we can only say that he had once belonged to the garrison at Vard Island, but had been dismissed for acts of violence, dishonesty and drunkenness. They still repeat stories, which he told when drunk, of a character to make one's hair stand on end, about how he and others had behaved when he was field sergeant,—from which position he had probably also been degraded,—and how he had fought in the German war. Since his discharge he made his living by acting as interpreter for the Russians, who lay along the coast bartering their wares, and he also traded a little on his own account. It was on a trip with the sea Finn, which was to extend beyond Busse Sound, where a Russian vessel was lying, that they had observed the wreck out at sea.

On the way home the Finn was very thoughtful.

He was a widower, and, after his wife's death, had taken charge of the family of his drowned brother, which he faithfully helped to support. It was already so hard for them to obtain bread, was it right for him to assume another trust? Nor did he expect his brother's widow to wear a happy face, whose propensity it was to take everything at the hardest. Next, the chief question was as to the wreck. If he obtained a small share of the money, it might perhaps recompense him, once for all, for the maintenance of the child; but then it also occurred to him that thereby he would be implicated more than he cared to be in what had transpired, therefore he said nothing about it. To possess one's self of "floating goods" without an owner, was a thing at which no man at that time would scruple. But these goods were not floating goods such as oars, nets and the like, but taken from a wreck, and their seizure deserved, and would receive, said the corporal, severe punishment from the authorities, since the vessel had been scuttled. It would need care to prevent the whole thing from becoming known, and ending with imprisonment at Vard Island.

The corporal was evidently displeased that the child had been rescued, and spoke much of Isak's keeping it well hidden. But if, through his fault, anything should be discovered about the vessel, which it was to be hoped now lay safe at the bottom of the

sea, he and his son could always save themselves, as no one had seen them in the boat, nor had they any stolen property from the wreck which could prove suspicious; the wallet, which was empty, he now said, he had thrown into the sea,—and at worst, he added, threateningly, “three would have to answer for scuttling her.”

Isak sat on the alert in the darkness; he was not free from the thought that the two others in the boat were ready to rid themselves of everything which could witness against them. In Buse Sound they rowed up alongside of Wassilieff’s sloop, which lay there, and there separated; but the last thing Stuwitz significantly said was: “Beware of Vard Island, Isak.”

He was unspeakably relieved to be rid of them; it was as if a heavy burden of sin had left the boat. When, shortly after, he carefully felt in the darkness, from his seat at the rudder, for the sea-boot behind him, and then anxiously fumbled under his jacket to know if the child still breathed, he felt conscious of having done a good deed. Alone, he sat and thought of his wife, now resting under the wooden cross in the churchyard; Kirstine had always wished for children,—now he had found in this little one a treasure for his old days. When he came home, all transpired as Isak had foreseen. Although his brother’s widow omitted nothing in her care for the

child, still it was evident that it was no welcome inmate, and at first she talked, more than Isak liked, about going to the sheriff and advertising, so that it might in any event be cared for by the sum provided by the district for the poor. On the shawl in which the child, perhaps two years old, was wrapped they found a breastpin fastening it, and on its linen the name Marina, embroidered. When the widow learned that the breastpin was gold, and perhaps worth ten dollars, she spoke in milder tones of going to the sheriff; they would also be obliged to advertise the canvas, which already lay upon the floor cut out for a new boat-sail, and she would have to give up the good coffee kettle, upon which she had set her heart.

Six weeks after, they heard, to their alarm, that the sheriff and lensmaud* had made searching inquiries on all sides concerning the wreck. It was rumored, also, to Isak's consternation, that Corporal Stuwitz and the captain and crew of the Russian Wassilieff's sloop were to be tried. Now, for the first time, he confided to his brother's wife all that had happened, so that she perceived there was but one thing to be done, namely, to keep the child quietly with them. Isak came to the conclusion that the wreck, though scuttled, had not sunk, but must have drifted into Finmark sea and there been visited again

* County officer.

by Wassilieff and Stuwitz, who had gone on board the sloop.

The barque *Future*, which was due at that time in Kollefjord with a cargo from Copenhagen, was discovered drifting out at sea, a wreck, and Wassilieff's coaster had been seen alongside her off Nordkyn.

When the authorities reached the vessel, they found her entirely stripped and scuttled, so that there was only the written deposition to be made, and to bury a young woman frozen to death, who, according to news received later from Denmark, proved to be the captain's wife.

One report, among the many circulating about the matter, was to the effect that Stuwitz's large boat, with Wassilieff's crew, had, the week previous, plied night and day between land and the wreck; that the mountain Finn, Jakob Nutto, for eighty of Charles the Ninth's bright silver dollars—the so-called receipt dollars, which the Finns are accustomed to bury—had undertaken to care for the goods up in the country until a more favorable time for the division of them. To make his innocence clear, the Russian very soon after ran into Kollefjord with his coaster, which, as God and every man—the authorities included—could see, had a full cargo of exchanged fish and Russian wheat from Archangel.

At the legal investigation, the few imaginary Norse witnesses disappeared in a remarkable manner. The

Russian crew, who had participated, denied everything, and old Jakob Nutto, who was a heathen, declared gladly with all his men, on false oath, that during the trading season they had bartered in skins and reindeer with Stuwitz, eastward in Hopseidsfjord. Afterward, in the tent, there was the usual baptism, as is their custom when the Finns wish to free themselves from the effect of an oath, or other Christian ordinance.

The Finn was right in so far that Stuwitz's son had been in at Hopseid and traded in skins for his father with the Finn's brother, Mathis; but this happened at least a week later, and was quite another affair. A Kven from the skerries, who had boldly said that he had something to testify to, was murdered on his way to the trial. There were many and various reports among the common people concerning what he had to testify. He was said to have been fishing near the Russian coaster, which lay concealed back of a projecting cliff, near land, and among other things saw that the Russian paid the mountain Finn bright silver dollars on the deck; also, that Stuwitz's son was on board her.

They were unable to save the wreck, as a north-easterly storm sent it southward again, and it was supposed that it must have sunk to the bottom of the sea.

A three-masted vessel cannot go under without

the results being felt in wide circles. One of these results was that the young chamber-counselor, Tobias Storm, in Copenhagen, who, as an officer under the government, collected some of the revenue funds of the custom-house, became bankrupt and a defaulter. As a partner in the manufactory at Kollefjord, he had ventured too much money in the vessel which his brother commanded, and he went, the following year, partly as a public precaution, up to Finmark, to endeavor, if possible, to save enough to shield himself from the worst consequences of his embezzlement. He did not succeed. But when the public debt, by the aid of friends, was paid, by drawing on the future from a legacy of which he received the interest, he was, on account of the peculiar circumstances, dismissed from service, but was still graciously allowed to wear his uniform. He lived afterward at Kollefjord, with Brogelmann, as bookkeeper, who took him on account of former connections with his family.

It was during these years that Brogelmann gained so largely by trading in Varangerfjord. The manufactories north were offered for sale at that time by the Copenhagen companies, and he was secretly negotiating with several of them.

The depreciation of money in 1813 to 1816 made many poor, but Brogelmann thereby became very rich. He had bought two of the best factories on

credit, and now, according to the law, all debts over the whole kingdom could be lawfully settled by paying two skillings on every specie dollar. Brogelmann made haste to settle at this propitious time, and during the immediate years following made many brilliant successes, until age and other circumstances caused him gradually to withdraw from business.

His authorized confidant during the latter years was young Stuwitz, of whose person we have above given the reader a glance.

The father, several years after the previously-mentioned incident of the wreck, died in reduced circumstances, and the son then came as clerk to Brogelmann. Here he showed so great a business talent and aptness that the direction of the northern trade in Kollefjord was soon committed to him alone when Brogelmann himself was in the interior at the other important trading posts. By conduct to which his employer too readily closed his eyes, Stuwitz had, before he was thirty years old, earned in those districts the name of "The Finns' Plague."

The year after Stuwitz had come into Brogelmann's business, it curiously enough happened that they came on the track of some of the notes which had disappeared with the sunk three-master,—the numbers had at the time been carefully advertised in the papers.

Investigation showed that the notes must have

come down to Bergen through one of Brogelmann's yearly payments for goods.

This at the time occasioned much talk and excitement up there.

When the sheriff made inquiries about the matter, young Stuwitz cleverly told him that there came notes from all parts and of all sorts into their money-drawer, so that there could be neither any trace or certainty of any especial one; he promised, however, for the future to keep a watchful eye on the matter.

When these things were talked about over at Lov-
isle, Isak readily understood that it was some of the money from the wreck, which Stuwitz had sought to give out; and with a certain pleasure he thought that the latter would perhaps be obliged to gnash his teeth inwardly, since he would be unable to make use of the rest of it.

The person not satisfied with this result was poor Tobias Storm. He had for a moment fired up with his old force, and pressed Stuwitz rather closely, but his position forbade his making more ado about the matter.

Tobias Storm was a widower; with the ship he had lost his only near relatives,—his brother and wife; he had given his note on his homestead, and therewith his whole fortune. He now seemed to be blunted in feeling and to have withdrawn into his shell.

When he was not busy with his work he was usually walking back and forth smoking his pipe.

His only confidant seemed to be the watchdog, which gladly came to him and laid its large black head on his knee while he sat on the steps puffing the smoke into the air. There was, perhaps, a silent speech in the smoke which the dog understood, for its eyes were constantly fixed upon his face.

When Storm saw Stuwitz approach he usually left. He could not endure him, but dared not, on the other hand, really show his dislike.

After dinner he often walked with his hands behind him up a steep mountain slope, which was called the pulpit, and from which there was an extended view out to sea. He would usually stand there for a time, looking, with a heavy heart, across the wide churchyard where the three-master and his fortune were buried.

One day — during the first year that he came to the house — he met a man who was still more sorrowful and heavy-hearted than himself, — a tall young fisherman, by name Lars, or “Big Lars,” as they called him, and he was apparently on the point of taking his own life.

Storm dissuaded him from his purpose, and induced him to accompany him home. The man’s speech and ways were somewhat unbalanced, but as he was, with the exception of short periods, useful at his post, Storm persuaded Brogelmann to take him into his employ.

CHAPTER II.

FLIGHT.

BROGELMANN lived in a small, poor way; he had always had too much to occupy him to think of building a new house, and was besides more comfortable in the old one, where fortune had always favored him. He kept, however, what they would call in Norland a good, hospitable house, and thither, on account of his business connections, came many sorts of people. Brogelmann himself, especially in his advanced years, after he was less occupied with his private affairs, was a good-natured and pleasant man.

His only daughter, Regina, had for several years been in Bergen.

On her return, she assumed control of everything concerning the interior management of the house, as a matter of course, but at the same time was careful that all orders were given, as before, by her old, weak mother.

Regina was, in her way, rather good-looking, although her face was commanding and severe in outline, and under its black curls reminded one somewhat of an ancestral portrait,—and she was always

neatly dressed while at her everyday household duties. There was undeniably something very powerful in her nature, therefore all submitted to her; but this strength was not agreeable, and was one of the reasons, probably, why, although over thirty, she was still unmarried. Those who in her eyes might have found favor felt that Hymen's (in this case literally golden) chains would not merely be figurative, but they would risk a veritable yoke—her will; while others quickly understood that they were either not sufficiently rich or not distinguished enough. While in Bergen, where she had in various ways made considerable sensation as the rich Brogelmann's daughter, she had actually reported that her grandfather was *Von Brogelmann*, and that she therefore was of noble blood; concerning her grandfather, and his removal north, she said nothing more. All were, however, united in the belief that her nature, with all her vanity, was a genuine one, but that she was in too great a degree her friend's friend, and her enemy's foe.

Regina had at an early period of her life, when in her seventeenth year, experienced a real love affair,—she was then not fully grown, and her slight figure, thin face and brown, sharp eyes were not at all attractive. A handsome, black-haired Danish pilot, who every year was for some weeks at Kollefjord, had subdued her heart and also flirted a little

with her; but when it came to the point, he did not care "to serve as second mate."

When Regina felt that by these words he had made merry at her expense, she fell into a serious illness, and was for many years, until she went to Bergen, very reserved. There, as we have said, her ambition was uppermost; but in accordance with her nature, in this, as in everything else, she drew too strong a bow.

At that time a son of the sheriff Heggelund was staying at the house. He was a student, and had passed his second examination, but, as it appeared, permitted the years to pass without further pursuing the student's path, and his father had therefore sent him to his friend Brogelmann to learn business.

By this nothing was gained, for the student lacked the necessary stability and interest, and spent his time in fishing and sailing. He was a tall, thin, fair-haired fellow, with a large, crooked nose, which lent a certain air of distinction to his face. He was treated with the greatest consideration by everybody in the house, almost as a guest. Many predicted that in the end he and the daughter would make a match: it was believed that Regina desired it, and therefore it would have to be so.

At such a trading-post, in those times, there were often one or more foolish persons, considered as a kind of clowns, who were permitted to do preposterous

things, give silly replies, or play all sorts of practical jokes. Especially was the steaming drinking-bout on Christmas a real trial to such a man, who, after having been the butt of the whole evening, at last became drunk, and often awakened in the strangest attire. The poor foolish Big Lars, who, as we said before, had come into Brogelmann's service, began gradually to play this sad role. His odd manners and increasing insensibility to his surroundings invited the others to try their wits on him. In the beginning it was so much the more interesting, as they did not feel quite sure how far it was safe to venture with this strong man. It was apparent, however, that the prospect of a glass of brandy might urge things on still more, and at Christmas he would go about in a paper hat, with bare breast and wooden sword. He created great amusement when, with his heavy, pale features, and his dead, introspective look, he stood at the end of the table and made grimaces over his glass before he drank, or when he repeated the performance sitting on the great oil-barrel, which they had induced him to bear in to the table as an evidence of his strength, and which he afterward again threw up on his shoulder and returned to the storehouse.

There was continuous laughter for a whole year after Big Lars and Per Plads managed to be capsized on a dead calm sea on a summer's day.

Long-legged Anders Hind, at the lensmand's, who, because of his height, went by the name of Giraffe, had one day, when these two were about to go out fishing, coaxed them into the warehouse; he had there induced them to wager which could drink the most brandy. They drank measure after measure to an astonishing number, and then staggered down to the boat, but were soon tired of rowing. As they lay sleeping in the fierce sun, they gradually drifted with the light breeze and stream far out to sea. At last, in the afternoon, Per Plads awoke, looked about, but could see nothing but the blue sea on all sides. He roused his comrade, who, in his sleepy stupor, was not less out of his head than the other, and took the unlucky resolution to climb up the mast that he might see land. The small boat was not capable of bearing Big Lars' heavy weight above; it whipped over, and they both got a cold bath, which they certainly needed.

There they sat in the calm, still day, and floated on the upturned boat for several hours, until another boat came and helped them to right their own and empty it. This story of Big Lars' shipwreck was repeated far and near.

After the daughter of the house came home, and a finer style prevailed in everything, Big Lars' role was more confined; he was not permitted, even at Christmas, to enter the family-room, and the jests

were carried on mostly down in the servants' hall. Thither Jon Zachariasen came into service when he was twenty years old. He neither advanced nor lost ground during the seven years he was there, nor was he concerned about it either, until the slender Marina, from Lov Island, came there to work. She was then nearly eighteen, and Jon twenty-seven, but her merry, fine manners and good-hearted smile charmed others in the house besides himself.

Jon was a strong, manly fellow, with clear, gray eyes that one might trust, and a handsome but serious face. He was given the management of a boat, was clever both in rowing and sailing, and besides well remembered every place where he had once been, so that he was always taken as captain. Though not talkative, in his quiet way he and Marina soon became good friends. On account of her good manners and appearance—and perhaps, also, through Stuwitz' quiet influence—she had the prospect of being advanced to housemaid when she had served her second year in the kitchen. Every morning and evening she found the water-tubs out on the porch filled, and all the wood carried into the kitchen; and she had also let Jon know that she was very thankful to him. But nothing occurred between them until Christmas-time of the second year that she had served in the house.

On Christmas day and evening the family and

servants ate, according to the old Norland custom, in the same room, and on Christmas evening a curious scene was usually enacted: Six or eight men, in their sea-coats and leather breeches, came as if straight from the sea, bearing between them, to the kitchen, a halibut, which, notwithstanding its size, was always disproportionate to the great exertions which it appeared to cause those bearing it, for they laid the fish down every moment to rest themselves. Halibut and veal are the standard Christmas dishes in all good Norland houses, and, according to the old custom, it was the men's duty to obtain the fish, while the calf was provided by the milkmaid. Meanwhile, as it is far from probable that a large halibut will swallow a hook on Christmas-eve, it must, as well as the fatted calf, be provided in advance. Between men and maids there is carried on, for some time before Christmas, an unusually eager strife to frustrate each other in this. If they succeeded in stealing the calf, the milkmaid was obliged to pass Christmas-eve, in shame and disgrace, on the roof of the barn; or, if the halibut were missing, the boatmen were compelled to bestride the ridge of the boat-house. And so much is thought of this, that the milkmaid, on the previous Christmas, when she lost the calf, felt that her own and the stable's honor were compromised to such a degree that the mistress had great trouble in persuading her to remain longer

in their service, though she had escaped the ignominy of being placed on the roof of the stable.

Previous to the present Christmas-eve, the strife waged hot; but Marina had lighted upon such a brilliant idea that the maids were almost presuming in their security. She had put the calf in a chest, and hidden it in a small boat which hung under the roof of the boat-house.

Wherever else the men might look, it would not readily occur to them to search on their own ground. Unfortunately, the noon before Christmas Jon missed the key to the boat-house, which the milkmaid, contrary to Marina's advice, had kept, that she might feel entirely safe. Jon soon guessed that the key, which always stood in the door, had been taken away intentionally, and at dark Marina saw him open the door with a crowbar.

Good advice was now dear.

When Jon had quite disappeared in the dark boat-house, the quick-witted Marina hurried in after him unobserved, if possible to get possession of the Christmas chest and take it out before Jon, who was apparently seeking it, should find it.

Jon fumbled and felt everywhere; he was as familiar with the interior, where he daily worked, as with his own chest. He once thought he touched something that moved off, and a moment after a measuring-pole fell down. In the corner, between

the large ten-oared boat and the wall, his outstretched hand felt a warm cheek, and now Marina was caught, as well as the chest, with which she had hoped to steal out. He held, at first with a tight grip, the hand which grasped the handle of the chest, but after, when he had recognized Marina, relaxed his hold. He felt her warm breath upon his face, and his heart beat harder and harder, right up in his throat, so that he could not say a word; the hand was so inexpressibly nice that he could not think of letting it go, neither did it try to get away. At last he said, softly, and abruptly:

“Since it is you, Marina, you can do what you will with the chest. I shall not say a word.”

With a whispered “Thank you, Jon; I know well I can depend upon you,” she tried now to glide past him, but between the large boat and the wall the space was too narrow. Then Jon put his arms about her, and said:

“Yes, even to the churchyard, Marina!”

Their cheeks touched each other for an instant, whereupon Marina suddenly tore herself loose, and ran up to the house.

Christmas-eve began, as usual, with religious exercises.

Old Brogelmann took out his horn spectacles and read a chapter from the Bible, and also a Christmas hymn, and that evening was ever afterward marked

in Jon's remembrance as the most solemn and happy of his life.

On the student's account, the Christmas-tree, with the presents for all the servants, was in the parlor. Jon got a porcelain pipe, with a woman's face on it, and three silver dollars wrapped in paper; Marina, a large, fine shawl. By chance, they both advanced at once to thank the master and mistress, and the manly Jon was unusually awkward, and Marina unnaturally red.

Not less bright in Jon's memory ever after were the days following Christmas. To Erick Spillemand's fiddle and Per Plad's clarionet, in the servants' hall, he danced the polka as gaily as if he had received both house and land.

The boys and girls played games, and it fell about naturally enough that they two paired off when they played "slip the sloop." They went round singing:

Now shall the yacht off to Bergen go,
 What can we now as a cargo show?
 Hight the man Irresolute from Rakinstad,
 Hight the woman Tvorre-Marit Lige glad.*
 They had a daughter so fair and kind,
 Where shall she this year a husband find?

Now shall the yacht off to Bergen bound,
 For as a cargo we've our daughter found;
 Rickety was the yacht so small from Villansstead,
 Sail there was none, but a skirt was there instead;
 Th' mast, it was a twirling-stick turned upside down,
 Th' helm—you will find it ere you get to town.

* Twirlingstick-Marit Don't Care.

Fresh now the winds south to Bergen blow,
Husband, dear, mine, the way do you know?
Steer, then, your yacht by the skerries all;
Keep where it's shallowest your boat so small,
Turn so the wind ever blows from behind,
Thus you'll be sure that your way you'll find.

Speeded the yacht then to Bergen in,
On the deck sat his daughter, the fairest queen;
Bright as the sun she on the city shone,—
Scores and scores of merchants bowed to her alone;
Merchant the proudest in Bergen town,
He shall this year for her own be found.

At the end of the last verse, those standing opposite paired off.

Only one evening was Jon gloomy, because he suspected that the student was down in the servants' hall, on Marina's account. Contrary to his accustomed good humor, his eyes grew wilder, and he surely would have acted rashly by carrying out his plan of pushing the student out the door, and himself from his situation, had not Marina chosen him for a partner, and quieted him by whispering that he must remember "what was best for both of them."

The same evening, out on the porch, Jon took her promise for life, and sealed it with a warm kiss. When, on the twentieth day of the festivities, Christmas was to be danced out, Jon led the "long dance" so well that it was for a long time talked about.

In a long line, some of the foremost, dressed as Christmas goats, led the company through the rooms, with the spillemand (fiddler) at their head. In the par-

lor, they passed before Brogelmann, his wife and daughter, who, with several guests, according to custom, received their burlesque greetings. The "long dance" ended out in the court-yard, where, as a rule, the last in line are violently thrown in turning. This depends much on the participants' power and dexterity. This time it was the student who, in exuberant mirth, had caught hold at the end of the line, and was thrown into the snow-bank.

It was not long, however, before Jon found his happiness somewhat insecure, and his existence almost a hell.

Not only the salesman, Thor Stuwitz, who was past thirty, but the student, also, now began to set their traps for Marina. Stuwitz forced upon her presents of all sorts, which she dared not refuse, but of which she honestly told her furious but somewhat discouraged lover. They both felt that a greedy hawk circled above their love, and that they were battling with a storm which would trouble a larger craft than theirs to weather. The worst was, she noticed that the salesman was helped by those home at Lov Island. Neither Jon, nor Marina possessed anything,—they must both exert themselves, and Jon must still work hard for several years. These plans could only too easily be destroyed by those inimical to them. It only needed an evil report to the master and mistress.

Jon was at this time very silent and reserved. One evening, when he was unusually sad, she made him so happy that his broad face glowed. Amid tears of indignation, she excitedly proposed that on their wedding-day they should collect all the kerchiefs and presents she was obliged to accept, tie them up in a knot with a stone, and sink them in the fjord,—she had, she said, shed salt tears enough over them.

One Sunday afternoon, toward spring, as Jon sat in the door of the boat-house, near the windlass, musing over his pipe, Marina, quite pale, came to him. She told him that while the others in the forenoon were absent at church,—Jon had himself rowed the church-boat,—the salesman had declared his love for her, which she had rejected on the spot. The big one-eyed fellow, so powerful with their master and mistress, had at last taken this occasion to lay his heart at her feet. His desire was that they should be secretly engaged for a year, and that they then should move to Olsvaag, where he had the prospect of buying the shop and adjacent fishing accessories at a low price when it was put up at auction. In the eagerness of his love, he blurted out that he had laid aside more than any one knew, and the coming year, he flattered himself, would not make him any the poorer.

His astonishment at the poor servant-girl's abrupt

refusal of his brilliant offer was written on his face, and he grew to have the look of a wild animal as he gazed upon her. But as she stood there modestly, with her hands folded over her white Sunday apron, and flushed with the fear of the moment, he could read so true and simple a "No," that he perceived there was nothing more to be said for the present.

A little later he again came to the servants' hall, when Marina sat alone, and with great unction and decision explained to her how honorable his offer was for her, and how it would gladden her poor old father; she was, besides, indebted to him for helping her on in the service and favor of that great house. When her quiet bearing and ready replies meanwhile gave him the same impression as before, his varnished good nature was suddenly swept from his face. The girl felt her knees tremble as he fixed his look upon her, as if surprised that such a little thing, whom he could, if he would, crush under his boot-heel, dared to oppose him. Quite contrary to his customary slow manner, he violently and angrily lifted the latch, turning at the door to say, with a threatening look, that he understood very well that the student had put flies into her head, but that he would know how to put a stop to improper conduct in that house. A worthy girl would not forfeit a good future when it was offered her, and she ought besides (he said, slowly and significantly,) to think well before

she made him her enemy. With these words, which signified that he should still wait for her to consider the matter, he closed the door after him.

These were not pleasant tidings for Jon, and it grew still darker when Marina, a few days after, was called into the parlor and given warning of dismissal in the fall.

The crisis had now come, and good advice was dear.

The salesman hoped that she, pressed by need, would at last yield, and Jon Zachariassen puffed furiously at his porcelain pipe, with its portrait of a fine lady, which, despite its very different features, and the fine dress of a princess, he fancied resembled Marina. They had the same slender throat, and as both had light hair, the happy illusion was complete, and a great comfort to Jon. In his lonely hours he sat and puffed the smoke about his Marina's face, and fancied that he talked with her as he speculated on what he should do.

His plans were at last formed. Late one night, after all were in bed, he imparted them to the real Marina out in the wood-shed, and the following day found him, in his brown vadmél Sunday clothes, and glazed hat in hand, in the office of old Brogelmann. He would pray "his father" to release him immediately, and give him the promise of his good will on leaving his service, as he had now something to do on his own account.

Brogelmann was, as we have said, a kind man, and Jon Zachariassen received his permission, with a good recommendation and a balance of twenty-one species, as well as an old leaky twelve-oared boat, considered worthless as it lay on the strand, and the tattered sails in the boat-house, which Jon begged "his father" to give him as a small present, in consideration of the seven years he had served him.

Big Lars also asked to be dismissed from service the same day. He had, after his own fashion, attached himself to Jon, who was the only person who did not mock him.

Jon spent the next fourteen days of the spring in repairing his boat; and then he and Big Lars started early one morning, before any one was up. Jon had with him some fishing-tackle, besides the few tools and sea-clothes which he owned,—among them a saw and axe, as well as a box of nails and provisions for a long absence. As the strong, dark-haired fellow, in his pointed red cap and sea-clothes, came out into the bay, which lay calm, rippled here and there by the morning breeze, the sun rose over the mountain, and cast its light upon a girl who stood on the landing. It was a bright omen for their coming life.

Those were empty and desolate days for Marina. Jon was absent, and the salesman lay in wait for her, as for a bird he now hoped to ensnare. The

student's courtship was really fortunate for the lovers, as through him the salesman's misguided attention was led away from Jon, whom he entirely disregarded. Stuwitz, for that matter, would willingly have trusted him to carry his love-letters if he had been at home.

Five months after, late in the autumn, Jon and Big Lars came sailing before a brisk breeze one day with a boat full laden with dried fish. In his sailor dress Jon walked, dragging a large fresh codfish, which he held by the gills, after him into the shop, where, according to custom, he threw the fish upon the counter, and asked for a dram in exchange, and later for an estimate on the fish he had in his boat. He promised very soon to bring more fish which still lay drying on the flakes at home. He needed ready money to buy a new boat, among other things, as the one he sailed with, he gaily said, was only fit for those who could "tread water." On that account, also, some of his fish had been wet on the way, and lessened in value.

Later in the evening he succeeded in speaking with Marina, who greeted him, laughing and crying at the same time, as she told him that she had seen him land, and from that moment had scarcely known what she was about, but in many things had done her work quite wrong.

As soon as she had talked with Jon, and heard

how good their prospects were, her face resumed the same peaceful, happy look it had lacked during all the sorrow and doubt which she had suffered for so long a time.

During the next fortnight Jon came with two full boat-loads of fish. When he had delivered all his cargo he was paid fifty specie dollars, twenty of which went at once to buy a better boat.

One morning the two went, dressed in their best clothes, to the office, and told Brogelmann how it all stood,—that they were betrothed, and thought of marrying that same fall,—as soon as the priest could bid the banns,—but that they were afraid of the salesman, who, on becoming informed of their intentions, would put hindrances in their way in Marina's home. Brogelmann sat and reflected for some time, but gave them no answer, only charging them, as he dismissed them, to be very careful, as their plan was not known or suspected by any one; and from this advice they took hope.

The next day he sent Jon with a sealed letter to the sheriff, which contained a request for a marriage license. Two days later, he himself went to the priest's house, and the next Sunday—it was the very day before the fall moving-day—much to the surprise of all, more especially to Stuwitz, they were married in church, and thence went straight south, in their boat, to their new home on Skorpen. But

from that hour they had Stuwitz's unceasing hatred and persecution, both because of the unusual beauty and comeliness of the girl, and because his security from the consequences of a possible discovery of the facts concerning Marina's birth was at stake.

It was Jon's secret that he had once discovered a beautiful little fishing-ground south of Skorpen, on one of his expeditions to Lov Island, and he remembered seeing the remains of a shipwreck not far from there. In his leisure moments, when he was weighing the pros and the cons of his case, he united the two facts in his head, and, with the aid of Big Lars, had that summer managed to build a little hut on Skorpen, close to the fishing-ground.

It was late in the autumn, on their wedding-day, when the two and Big Lars, having with them the little they owned, and some Christmas food which they found in the boat, well knowing whence it came, sailed away south to their new home.

Midway on the fjord, the first day, something happened which Big Lars puzzled his brains about for many years. Marina gave Jon a bundle, which they first opened,—so that Lars plainly saw several silk handkerchiefs,—and afterward tied it up again tight with a heavy stone in the knot. They then took it, each with one hand, and dropped it over the side of the boat, with much laughter and delight.

As Big Lars was apparently racking his brains

over what had happened, Jon told him, with apparent gravity, that it was only Thor Stuwitz and a student from Christiania, who had gone to the bottom with a stone tied to their necks,—a witticism which Marina's smiling face showed she keenly appreciated, but which left Lars no wiser than before.

As a conclusion to his meditations, he asked Marina, who sat in the stern with Jon, to hand him the beer-mug. He then raised his heavy person in the boat, and drank a health to both of them, wishing them "smooth sailing in all waters."

It came to pass, as had been predicted, in that Brogelmann's daughter, not long after, was betrothed to the student Heggelund.

Old Brogelmann now withdrew more than ever from his business in the north. A few years before his death he bought his son-in-law a trading-post farther south, in M—— Sound. As his marriage portion, he gave him his full power of attorney to conduct his business, and to be the real managing head of the firm. This was a moral obligation which Heggelund sustained to his prudent father-in-law, living with the latter his whole life through, under a sort of secret supervision, which was oppressive enough to him; but he lacked character, and, as his condition evidenced later, also the necessary insight into his own business affairs, to cast it off.

CHAPTER III.

SALVATION FISHING-GROUND.

A YEAR had passed since Brogelmann's time, and his daughter, married to Heggelund, now presided over her large house down at M—— Sound.

Jon Zachariasen and his wife had gained a step in life. They had trudged on patiently through good and ill, and now had several children. Jon's cabin lay on the brow of the cliff over the sea, at the entrance of a mountain ravine which traversed the narrowest part of the rocky island Skorpen. If the mountain, in the early morning of time, had been fissured a few feet deeper, the crevice would have formed a natural canal between the sea and the small sound inside which separated Skorpen from the mainland. The stream bears the name of "The Corners," because it winds itself in capricious turns among the many rocks and holms, so that from below one cannot see the outlet into the bay, and the mountain is for a long distance up clothed with friendly grass-plots and foliferous trees. Sea-birds build their nests on all the small islets in the intricate channel, where the water is always clear and still for their young to dive about in. In such a spot a shot is reluctantly fired, and

therefore the eider-ducks had made their nests in quiet security under the very steps and walls of Jon Zachariassen's house, in his boat-house and sheds. The birds, eider-ducks, red-legged oyster-catchers, herons, black guillemots, gulls and cormorants, with and without cause, would many times a day fly suddenly into the air together and fill the place with a fearful screeching and cawing. On account of the fishing-ground outside, Jon had been forced to leave the more sheltered spot and place his house on the open side, scarcely a rifle-shot from the white, billowing sea. He had chosen the spot for his nest with the same instinct that the sea-birds choose theirs: he would avoid two powerful enemies—the northwest storm and the snow-fogs which, in winter, accompany it. The wind would carry the snow over that side of the glen under which the house lay; thus the road, even in the worst weather, was always passable to the sea in the lee of the mountain-wall. The small, sloping patch of earth about it had been laboriously borne hither from other parts of the island, and it could readily be seen that the house, as it stood there with its back wall aslant, leaning against the mountain, was the remnant of an old ship's cabin, with enlargements added as there was need. Under the sloping roof, with its golden dandelions, the small, green port-holes projected like a pair of eyes half blinded by the splashings of the sea, deep sunk under a brow over-

grown with hair, and the path, which ascended from the moss-grown landing-place up over the stones to the house, might remind one of a gangway. Directly under, on the shore, stood the gray boat-house, with its roof covered with birch-bark and heavy stones outside to protect it from the storm.

On account of the part it had played in their lives, Jon and Marina called their fishing-ground "Salvation,"—a name which it still bears on official sea-charts. A chart-maker or seaman, who, on a stormy night, measures thereon with his compass to keep a proper distance from the dangerous reefs, would listen surely with an incredulous smile to the declaration that the vessel, which, to judge by the name of the place, had once upon a time been saved here from shipwreck, was so airy a thing as two young people's barque of love.

And yet, perhaps, with the various remarkable names given to the innumerable points, rocks and islands along our coast, are connected many affecting stories, even less credible, of the unobserved peasant life about us. That gray promontory, whose name will never be washed away, still stands as a monument of this long-forgotten circumstance; as with many others in the saga of that race whose foot-prints remain, and will always remain, upon our weather-beaten coast.

The "Salvation" grounds, which consisted of

three shoals of varying depths, lying in line one after the other, was but a five-miles' row. From the house, those who were at home (and these were now Marina and her three surviving children,—a boy and girl our Heavenly Father had taken to Himself) could see the boat, when the father and Big Lars, as usual morning and evening, lay out there fishing, drawing in the lines, or cleaning fish on the skerry, whose low ridge otherwise was usually covered with great gulls and other sea-birds, sitting in rows watching for the refuse from the codfish.

In summer, Marina and the children were sometimes with them, for amusement; but during the first years of their marriage, while they were still very poor, the young Marina had been obliged, while Jon lay sick the half of two successive years, and Stuwitz refused them credit, to fill the second place in the boat, and in sea-clothes to go splashing about in all sorts of weather. Marina's favorite place, on summer evenings, was in the open door. When the sun set, in its unspeakable glory, in the great gold and purple sea, it seemed as if Jon was half in heaven. She was wont to seat herself on the threshold on such evenings, softly singing to herself, with her knitting or other work in hand, while the children played on the steps before her.

Her daily anxiety was for the sudden squalls from the black clefts of the great mountain on

the mainland,—for the greedy whirlpools, and the deceptive shoals, which would often shift without warning on the calmest day. And then there were Jon's hard trips at Christmas-time, with his dried fish, to the trader in Sorstrommen. There was a harder sea thither than to Heggelund, in M—— Sound; but unless forced, they would not apply there since the year when Stuwitz had refused them credit at the shop. Stuwitz also sorted the fish unjustly and lowered the price.

In the boat, which Jon and Big Lars rowed, there was now nearly always a third person, who, small as he was, already did service in baiting the hooks.

He was the delight of the house,—this curly, golden-haired, lively little Morten. Always merry, whistling and willing, he had ever something on hand,—small fish-dams, bird-snares, and many rare things which he himself invented. Skorp Island, with its strange winding entrance over shallows and between the holms, together with its fishing-ground outside at sea, was his world. He guessed to a dot where the flounders lay when he was out to spear them; knew every sea-bird's habits and ways, and knew each one among them which had been hatched upon the skerry, and which later every year came in to its old nest, to depart later in the summer, taking its young flock with it. When the birds of passage came, bound for Finmark, many rare fowl lighted on

the rocks, among which the fighting reeves seemed to him the most remarkable, and he pondered much over the land whence these came. The song-swan was there also, which he insisted was the most beautiful of all birds.

He was eleven years old the first time he went to church at Sandeid and saw the peasants assembled. He noticed many things. The church had three entrances, through which one company after another moved slowly in and seated themselves in rank and file back of each other, just like the sea-birds on the skerry at home,—the dark menfolk on the one side, and the light womenfolk, with linen hoods or kerchiefs, on the other side. He was almost certain, when the codfish came, the whole flock would suddenly fly up, screeching, as at home. But later, he had an eye only for the stately Mrs. Heggelund, who, in her silk dress, with a heavy gold chain about her neck, sat just below the pulpit, and held a little girl upon her lap, who laughed and pointed her finger at him. When he came home he received, for the first time in his life, a serious punishment. He had erected a pulpit of stone, and got his two sisters to act as congregation, while he baptized the lamb and the pig, and mimicked the priest. A warm box of the ear from his father's heavy hand put a stop suddenly to the solemnity, and subsequently he received a severe whipping.

It often happened in summer that Morten, accompanied by Big Lars alone, went to the fishing-ground to draw the lines, or to fish. The giant usually kept silence, while Morten, in his father's large woolen jacket, and red pointed cap on his head, wondered in secret over many things, and counted the Norland ships which, in summer and autumn, sailed slowly past, with large, broad sail, and cargo of fish stowed high up against the mast. He had already at an early age begun to read, with Marina for a teacher. The first letters he learned were the big broken ones carved in relief on the beam nearest the roof in their smoked, narrow room; there still remained traces of tarnished gilding on some of them. The end of the beam was broken off, but collectively the letters formed the word "Future," and Marina told him that the future lay in God's own hand. He was now studying the catechism, and often lay in the stern of the boat and read his lesson, with his fish-line fastened to the oar-pin,—a thing he was not permitted to do when his father was along.

One lovely midsummer night they were out on the fishing-ground. At sunset, twelve of the clock, the midnight orb lay, after a glorious, brilliant descent, like a spent red ball on the western horizon, while the great swells rolled violet as far out as the eye could see. A little after, the sun kindled again with a glory of straight-shooting rays, followed by the

morning red, which raised cloud-pillars of gold between sea and sky. The flame-like waves licked the boat, in which the two silent fishers sat mirrored in the water below; at the same moment Big Lars drew in a beautiful red perch.

When he had taken it in over the gunwales, he suddenly asked Morten if it was written in his book that this sort of red fish was best liked by mermen. Morten started, and was obliged to acknowledge that this was not affirmed in the catechism, so far as he had read. Lars explained to him that the eyes were always sprung from the head when it came up, because the mer-king pressed the life out of it as soon as it bit the hook.

In this way the ice was broken, once for all, for a long series of communications of this sort, always ending in the marvelous. As they lay out on the fishing-ground, summer evenings, and drew in the golden-red brown codfish, or now and then a ling or halibut, Morten learned much that he had not heard of before. Lars taught him that every sort of fish had its king, or leader, which it was a bad omen to catch. There were salmon, coalfish and mackerel kings, with crowns on their heads, and the king of the codfish. The latter was not so dangerous, for it was often taken. Out of respect, it was never split open down the belly, but down the back; it was delivered "round," and the head and entrails allowed

in weight. There was also a sea-monster, called the kragen, which was as large as a whole island, and which sometimes, in calm weather, came to the surface of the water, and the surf broke about it as against a rock. Experienced people could tell if the boat and lines were lying over it; fish were always plenty there, but when it became threatening they were obliged to row. Lars declared solemnly that he had often been out after it, up in Finmark sea. Morten pondered much over this; he thought they might catch the kragen if they would put out a great chain from the mountain, with a ship's anchor for a hook, and suitable bait on it.

At this time a rumor had long been in circulation, over all Norland, that a remarkable new ship would show herself there. It would go without sail, with only smoke and wheel; and one summer it was seen steaming past Skorp Island. Some time after, Morten made a wheel-boat which he could drive by a lever, but the father's old twelve-oared boat, which had been taken for this purpose, went much better with the oars than with this machine, which was only for Sunday amusement. Marina was quite proud of the invention, but Jon thought less of it because of people's criticism, and there was no speed in it either.

CHAPTER IV.

FINN CORNER.

JON ZACHARIASEN'S nearest neighbor lived on Finn Point, down at Finu Corner. The inaccessible, wooded interior of Skorp Island is penetrated by a narrow but deep sound nearly opposite the naked, black mountain-wall on the mainland. On a promontory which Skorp Island forms here, and which is called Finn Point, stood, at that time, only a single hut, built by a Kven. The steep, grass-grown bank on that spot was, moreover, the only place in the sound where a house could have been built.

There lived the Kven in his little mud hut. Some branches formed the framework of the roof, which blackened the wall of the cliff behind with its smoke; and down on the strand lay a couple of cross-bars, which served to hold the boats. His wife was a Finn-Lapp, and when in summer her people, on their yearly removal to and from Sweden, swam their reindeer across the sound to graze on the island, they crossed the strand close under the Kven's hut, and up over the steep paths which led into the island's high flats in its interior. The place being fitted by nature to their needs, the neighborhood of the Kven's home was

a prescriptive resting-place for the Finns, who, during the time they remained on Skorp Island, raised their six or eight journeying tents. This plot of ground, therefore, from time immemorial, has borne the name of the Finn's Corner, probably because of the winding stream in the vicinity. The custom of resting here was kept up even after the hut was deserted and the place otherwise rebuilt.

The Kven,—a strong, active fellow with light hair and blue eyes,—could not, on the whole, thrive in his life with the Finns, from whom he had taken his wife. On one of his trips with them he had found this convenient spot for settling himself permanently, or, as they say in Norland, become a “husbandman.”

In summer, there was good home fishing, and in winter he rowed to the great fishery. The patches of earth about the house supplied a few potatoes, and fed some sheep and a cow. They also stripped the branches of the trees up on the slope, and his wife in winter cut the sea-weed off the rocks for the cow. As often as their parents came, they also gladly left, as thanks for their abode, a reindeer for meat, some skins for winter wear and shoes, some dried quarters of reindeer, a little linen thread, and other things which they thought might be of use in the house.

The summer day when their Finn dog “Musti” (i.e. black), with its pointed ears, suddenly rushed frantically up the height whining, and then back to

the hut, running to and fro on the top, and standing still for a time barking in wild frenzy, was also a holiday for the family, but a double one for the Finn's daughter, who silently suffered with longing for her own people.

When they were seen coming down from Morknas cliff, on the other side of the sound, the Kven at once set out with his boat to fetch them over; and for fear of his swimming out and frightening the deer prematurely, they were obliged to hold Musti, who, mad with joy, helped his comrade "Sjorris," and the other Finn dogs, to drive the deer across the strand. And in the embrace and answering greeting, "God give," with which the Kven's wife, in Finnish custom, made her parents welcome to the house, lay a whole year's longing for home. First they unloaded the large bucks, which, led by the old Finn himself, his wife and eldest daughter, carried the tents and chattels, and the baskets, in which a couple of grandchildren lay, wrapped in skins, sleeping or eating, as comfortable and warm as any nobleman's child in its cradle. The crippled little old great-grandfather, over one hundred years old, whose rheumy eyes were blind, and who had lived during "seven kings' reign," was led into the Kven's hut, and given the seat of honor, which he seldom left during the whole time, except on a bright day to rock himself in the sun. He would stroke his grand-

daughter's face with his hands, and always inquire immediately after the news. He was, as a few old Finns still were at that time, unconverted, and would die in his forefathers' faith. When they came one year without him, they told that he had died, and at his request had been wrapped in birch-bark, and buried under his upturned sled in a heap of stones on a mountain waste.

An hour after the leaders, came the entire herd, in three divisions, guarded by the daughters and sons-in-law and servants, surrounded by a crowd of dogs, which sprang and jumped down the strand, now swimming out after an animal, now shaking the water off, earnest in their duty of keeping the deer together.

For this summer month the Kven's wife was again a Finn girl in her parent's tent, and Musti a Finn dog. She was happy in teaching her daughters all a Finnish woman's duty.

The Kven looked quietly on. He was fond of his wife, whose mild disposition was the opposite of his own. He knew that it was her nature, and that it must have vent.

The old bucks, now free, grazed without watchers on the height, while the rest of the flock, more quiet, kept together below, feeding on the patches of moss lower down on the plain, and always instinctively snuffing the wind. Down on the wooded

slopes, where the rank fern grass in many spots concealed the body of the deer, they could be seen only on days when the sea-fog wrapped the mountaintops in their fleecy-gray, impenetrable cloud-caps. Then they met there the swarming, screeching seagulls, flying inland from the storm and fog.

But sooner or later—always sooner than they expected—came the parting-day, which the daughter, living only in the present, like all her people, put off all thought of as long as possible. The deer were first brought together, and the next day crossed the sound following the boat, back of which the bell-deer swam, held with cords by the old Finn, while the heads of the rest of the flock in a long line emerged from the water like branches of trees.

And now they must say farewell. There was a tearful embrace for every one,—the old parents last. The Kven's wife laid her eldest daughter and the little one, born to her after many years, on her parent's breast, with the Finnish words of leave-taking, "Peace be with you," tremblingly and almost despairingly uttered on her part. She scarcely spoke for two or three days after, or until she was fairly established again in her old mode of life.

The Kven bore with her patiently; for he knew by experience that the poignancy of her grief would soon wear off, and she would talk gaily of all that had happened, and would happen the following year.

In January, a few days before he was to leave her to spend the gloomy winter without him, her grief violently broke forth afresh.

The night before her husband went off to the fishing-ground she slept very uneasily. She dreamed that her dead great-grandfather stood by her bed, and said that she was to go home again to her own people. Then she seemed to follow him down to the boat-landing, and there lay a coffin without a lid, half full of water, tossing on the beach. He said it was the boat in which they were to cross the sound. When in her terror she tried to reach her husband, whom she saw standing sorrowful in the doorway, with their youngest daughter in his arms, the old man seized her by the arm so violently that she awoke with a scream.

The stolid Kven is seldom superstitious, like the Finns and Norlanders, and when she told the dream to her husband he said that it was only a mare (a nightmare); but in her own mind she felt sure that it was a warning.

One cold winter day in March, the Kven's wife and her fourteen-year-old daughter, Lyma, went out to one of the islands in the bay to collect sea-weed. Only another daughter, five years old, and the dog were left at home. While they were busy cutting the sea-weed the mother happened to look up, and she saw their boat slowly drifting away with the current.

It must have loosed itself from the slippery stone to which it had been fastened.

For some time, sea-weed in one hand and knife in the other, she stood petrified, gazing after the boat. Then it became gradually evident to her that they must face death just outside their own door, within call of both child and dog, for there was no mortal to help them.

So it went on until next morning. The half-grown daughter spread her clothes over her mother, who, in a stupor, and half covered with snow, lay behind a rock on a bed of sea-weed, where they had both spent the night trying to keep each other warm. She was about to venture across the narrow sound with the ebb tide,—and in the worst case she could but perish in the attempt,—when Marina was seen rowing around the point in her little boat.

Like thousands of Norland women in the fishing season, Marina remained at home with the children while Jon and Big Lars were down in Lofoten, and during those two or three months she had many wakeful hours at night. During this night she fancied she heard in the distance the howl of a dog, and could not rid herself of the thought that something had gone wrong at Finn Corner.

As soon as it was light she went over to the top of a hill, on the other side of the island, where she could see the Kveu's house. She saw distinctly,

against the snow, the black dog, which was running restlessly to and fro. This strengthened her forebodings, and she started out at once in the little boat which lay on the shore,—and came in time. But the mother was seized with a violent nervous fever, through which Marina nursed her faithfully, and she died two days after her husband came back from the fisheries.

When Mathis Nutto's family returned to Skorpen, the next summer, they met sorrow instead of joy. It was arranged that the oldest daughter, Lyma, should go with her grandparents; and a couple of years after, the Kven married one of Nutto's other daughters, "so that he might have a woman to look after the house."

The children of Jon Zachariasen and the Kven, who now had two more by his second wife, looked forward with equal delight to the month in summer when Mathis Nutto's tents were pitched on the beach. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons were special holidays to them, for then the reindeer were brought down to be milked.

After the warm summer day the sun was already beginning to redden the mountain side, when the first marching horns were seen outlined on the clear sky, high up on the cliff. Soon after, two deer were seen approaching. Then came a brown, moving mass of deer, with the peculiar crackling sound of a hun-

dred hoofs, in a broad, steady stream through the leafy thickets on the mountain-side. Around them gamboled the barking dogs, amid encouraging or angry cries from the keepers, gradually filling the still evening air with shouts, noise and laughter from great and small, all in a feverish bustle. The undersized people, with their soft language, square galloon-trimmed summer caps, and their particolored, open-breasted woolen dresses, edged with bright blue, red, yellow or green,—suited the strong summer light of the north quite as well as similar gay colors do the south,—formed a peculiarly lively scene, and the children felt as if they were in fairyland.

At last, after some chasing, the reindeer were brought down into the inclosure where they were to be milked. Some of them lay quietly resting, while others stood butting one another playfully with their horns. The men threw their never-failing, lasso-like leather cords, made of strips of reindeer skin, over the heads of the struggling, terrified deer, which, after a short contest, were led in and tied to the nearest milking stake. Here, in the sunshine, stood the tall, black-eyed Lyma, in her red cap with its gold band, warm and eager at her work, and laughing at her lover's efforts. He was the broad-shouldered, pleasant-faced Isak Pelto, who owned nine hundred reindeer, and she was to marry him next winter at Karasundo, in Sweden, his winter home.

Lyma always brought some small presents to Jon's children. She was particularly friendly with Morten, the oldest, and had been so ever since the year that she was saved from the rock and Marina nursed her mother so tenderly. First she must pet her deer and give it salt, and then milk it into her own little bowl, while Morten stood beside her and drank the rich, delicious milk, as good as cream.

Two hours after, all was completed, and the same picturesque scene was repeated, but the shadows fell longer in the thickets on the hill, and the deer hurried up the mountain to their wonted resting-place on the cliff,—only the cries of men and barking of dogs were heard in the distance in the quiet evening.

Afterward, great and small, the servants as well, assembled in the twilight for another hour, to hear stories and adventures. Mathis Nutto, who sat on a log outside the tent, would take flint and steel from his blue neckerchief, arranged to hold them, and strike fire in his short, black pipe. He blew thick puffs of smoke into the evening air, while old Silla sat nodding with age, and told stories; now and then, when she forgot herself and began to hum softly, they had to rouse her.

One of the young men, Eddis by name, was constituted jester, and always led the merriment. Some evenings they had joiken (short improvised songs), sometimes in honor of a special person, but often

also satirical. They sat squatting about in a circle, and sang in chorus.

Then Morten heard about Silver Sara, who went about on the mountain with a silver belt underneath her cloak. She had a runic-box, and could "weave charms." This and many other stories fascinated the boy, and life in Finn Corner always seemed like a fairy-tale to him.

The ever-busy Stuwitz had been casting longing eyes on Finn Corner, he considering it a singularly fine situation to establish a trading-post. It united, in a rare degree, all the requisite conditions—a good harbor and a fishing-ground just outside, besides affording a fine opportunity to unite all the Finnish trade from the mainland, by traffic with the people passing on their way to and from the fisheries.

The two families living on Skorpen had thus a common enemy to fight.

Stuwitz felt that, by fair means or foul, he must get rid of the present inhabitants, who occupied the best spots on the island. But this was no easy matter, for many interests were here combined. He met with stubborn resistance in Finn Corner. The Kven was supported by Finns, who would not give up, for any price, their ancestral resting-place and summer pasture on Skorpen. Both Jon and Marina, who loved their home and fishing-ground, evasively replied that

they were determined to stay as long as the Kven remained in Finn Corner, for the money that was offered them would not last long, and then they would have to begin anew in another place.

Stuwitz's next attempt was to buy the whole island; but this failed, because it was church property and consecrated ground.

And now began, on his part, a series of persecutions, such as a rich merchant could, in those days, only too easily inaugurate against a poor man. He bought up Jon's debt for an outfit for the fisheries, and levied an execution upon it. By the time the sheriff's officers had entered the house and made a levy and list of everything, the sum, with all the many costs added, was doubled, and they had nothing to look forward to but an auction sale.

Soon after came a summons both to them and to the Kven at Finn Corner, to answer for some fish-nets which had been spoiled for Stuwitz's boatmen down in Stam Sound, and which the men in Jon's boat and her comrade boat, rowed by the Kven, were accused of cutting off and carrying away.

The truth of the matter was that one day, the winter before, they had cut part of a net bearing the mark of Heggelund on the floats; but it was absolutely necessary, as it often is at sea, and they had taken none of the net on board. Now Stuwitz's men insisted that they had recognized a lot of ordinary

rope tied around the tiller in Jon's boat. In such cases, there are often to be found plenty of witnesses to testify — not to the truth, but as others wish, until it becomes serious and they are compelled to take oaths.

The whole thing would have been dropped, and would never have been carried so far as to accuse people of stealing, if Stuwitz had not been trying just then, with all his might, to drive them away from Skorpen. But Jon swore secretly that, even were he left as destitute as the first day he came there, he would not be driven either from his home or fishing-ground, and Marina agreed with him. She said, bravely, that help would come from Him who was stronger than Stuwitz.

Heggelund was as ignorant of this matter as of all else which concerned his business affairs: this and all other matters were wholly controlled by Stuwitz.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEA FINN ISAK.

THE sea Finn Isak, of Lov Island, had never been quiet in his mind since the night he had parted from Corporal Stuwitz and his son in Busse Sound. He perceived more and more, as the years advanced, that by concealing the girl he had committed a far greater sin, both against his conscience and the law, than the one he had once feared punishment for, namely, theft of the wrecked goods, and the prospect, if the matter came up, of being undeservedly made a party to the scuttling of the ship. He could not, when it came to the point, prove what he knew about Stuwitz; the latter needed only, as his father had said, defiantly to deny it all. But Stuwitz had sufficient evidence, in Marina herself, against him. This, too, Stuwitz, on several occasions when they met later, had given him to understand.

Isak had helped to influence Marina, at the time that Stuwitz made her an offer of marriage at Brogelmann's, because of his fear; it seemed to him that all danger would then be at an end. That Stuwitz might have similar motives did not occur to him with any clearness. He lived as under a constantly

threatening storm, which clouded all happiness for him in this life, and gradually, as he grew weaker, made him anxious also for the life to come. But Stuwitz, the author of all this fear and heaviness, he hated with all his heart, most deeply and profoundly, with a sentiment which constantly increased with his inability to retaliate.

Isak was now both old and weak; but he took to his bed only when forced, for then his conscience troubled him more. One fall he was laid up longer than usual, and believed that he would not get well again. He was then very much troubled, and sent word to Marina that she must come before it was too late, for it seemed that he could not again rally.

It was a long way northward, but there was a good wind, and Marina set out immediately, accompanied by Big Lars and Morten, while Jon remained at home with the house.

When she arrived, Isak was a little better. Many things were talked over between them at his bedside, and it was then disclosed that he was not her real father. He could neither live nor die in peace, he said, before he had received her forgiveness, and would confess to the priest when it was probable his end was near. But she must promise him, both for his own and his widowed sister's sake, who shared in the transaction, not to reveal the fact to any human being, not even to her husband, (a clever

fellow, with whom he had so long been a companion at the oars,) until he closed his eyes in death. The breastpin that had fastened the shawl he now took from a box and gave her.

Marina was quite overcome. When he prayed for her forgiveness, she replied that it was so easy, God be praised, to give him that, and her full heart's thanks besides; for otherwise she would not have been rescued from the wreck, or found Jon, who was more to her than all the riches of earth. Thereupon she went over and caressed her foster-mother, who now, old and bent, sat weeping on the hearth.

When in the boat, on her homeward journey, Marina sat filled with manifold meditations; she sometimes gazed reflectively for a long time at Morten, as if he were concerned with her thoughts. In old Isak's story, much of which she could not make fully clear, there was one point which sorely troubled her; it was as if she there discerned a gleam of light—why had Stuwitz wished to marry her at Brogelmann's? Had he feared discovery, or did he think to win something by it? Marina felt a little sanguine.

It weighed upon her, when she returned home, that she had so solemnly promised not to take Jon into the matter before her foster-father's death.

As for old Isak, after he had lightened his heart by confession he became stronger than he had known

himself for a long time. Stuwitz might do what he would; he now felt that our Lord, at all events, would not be shut out from his room.

Several years before, a mountain Finn, Mathis Nutto, had once complained to him of being very unfortunate. He had, as was the custom at that time among the Finns, buried his money on the mountain, in a stone heap near a holy spot—an altar, and, among the rest, four hundred rix dollars in paper money. They were spoiled by lying, and he had then gone to Tromso to change them at the merchants' for silver, but heard there—as often happened with the Finns—that they had long since been called in. He had, he said, come by them in trading with Stuwitz, for skins and reindeer, many years before. Isak, at that time, hinted nothing to Mathis of what he thought about the money.

Now, when it was reported how Stuwitz was persecuting the people on Skorp Island, and had become inimical to the Nutto family, who had a reindeer pasturage there, this circumstance again occurred to Isak, and a way seemed to open for him to strike Stuwitz so that he might not suspect where the blow came from. Mathis Nutto always spent the summer on the mainland, and when Isak once passed the Finn's tent, apparently on business, he introduced the matter.

The Finn's eyes lighted when Isak told him there

was a chance to get back his money again, if he, once for all, would give his promise and oath not to mention his name in connection with the matter, under any circumstance. Without minutely going into detail, Isak then confided to him that Stuwitz would not like to have this money come before the officials' eyes. He should go straight to him himself and demand the exchange; if he refused, he should immediately threaten him with going to the sheriff, "as he knew very well the money was marked by the authorities." For this advice Isak asked nothing but his silence.

After they had separated, Mathis sat on a log, as was his custom, rubbing his cap to and fro on his head, nodding and laughing to himself in heartfelt admiration at Isak's sharpness. Yes, the more he thought it over, the better and surer seemed to him the weapon Isak had placed in his hand, and it occurred to him to use it a bit farther than Isak had thought,—to restrain Stuwitz from pursuing them further at Finn Corner. He only needed, after the exchange, to give Stuwitz to understand that he had still some of the notes in reserve for use, in case the former should in future trouble him or his.

But Isak could get no rest until he had been to Dean Muller and lightened his heart by confession. He went to him, for the latter had gained the confidence of the peasants as no other priest had. Late or

early, in all sorts of weather, or on untraveled roads, one might meet the handsome, white-haired Dean, out on his quiet, richly-blessed mission. In winter, one usually met him in a home-made sled of Finnish fashion, somewhat like a pulk (Finnish sledge). What Isak acknowledged to him during his secret confession awakened in no slight degree the Dean's attention. He was a good friend of Heggelund's, and had often met Stuwitz there, whose person had never pleased him. There was a disagreeable secretiveness in the man's manner, which, now that he had had this glimpse into his life's history, he thought explained itself.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SUMMER ASSIZES. BIG LARS.

TWICE in the year, when the general court of assizes for business and taxation was held at Heggelund's house down in M—— Sound, great ceremony prevailed, and the peasants assembled from the whole country around. The fjords outside swarmed with boats full of Norlanders, in their pointed red woolen caps, who came thronging the bay from all parts. The mooring-places at the quay were soon all taken, and the beach gradually filled clear across with rows of stranded boats. Turned on one side, with their sail for a wall in front, many served as improvised tents, giving shelter for the night, while the coffee-kettles steamed before them all day. Groups of chatting men were always forming near the fireplaces built among the rocks. The Norlanders in their glazed hats and new, dark blue vadmél jackets, which stained their hands and wristbands, formed the principal part of the crowd; there were the large Kvens, dressed partly in Norland and partly in Finnish costume; also a few Finns. Among the latter was a strikingly well-formed young Finn woman, in her handsome holiday summer dress of green stuff, bordered with yellow galloon, and

a gold band about her red cap. A string of glass beads crossed her handsome silk breastpiece, and about her waist was a broad, richly-chased silver belt, from which hung her knife and her sewing utensils. Suspended by a cord about her shoulders she bore a basket ornamented with beads, in which her child lay. It was Lyma and her relatives, who had come to the court on account of the Kvens' suit, having been summoned as a witness.

The rich Russian Wassilieff was also there, with two ordinary Russians in his train. He came on account of a deposition that was to be taken in reference to one of his vessels, which had been wrecked, and was Heggelund's guest. In their long kaftans and high turbans they moved about among the motley crowd, from which snatches of Norse, Finnish, Kvenish and Russian, blending, formed a veritable *lingua franca* in their ears.

There were two landings in the place, one for the peasants, leading to the shop and the warehouse, where Stnwitz, all-powerful in business matters, resided, and the other intended for guests, from which the path led up to the garden, whose white lattice gate always stood open.

When the tall, spare, crooked-nosed Heggelund, in black coat and stiff white neckcloth, big bright meerschauum pipe in hand, escorted a judge or sheriff, who for the occasion was always dressed in glittering uni-

form, up the path to the house, the people, as was the custom, stood with bared heads; and also when the authorities went, twice a day, from the house to the court-room to execute the law. As the district attorney, on this occasion, was led up amid the salutes and raising of flags, the ponderous Wassilieff,—whose white waving beard covered his face so closely that little but his brow, eyes and sharp aquiline nose could be seen,—suddenly dropped before him like a falling tree. The old starower—as they called the faithful Russians of the elder church—kissed the high authority's feet, after the Russian fashion,—a sign of honor which the attorney strove to avoid as well as he could.

At this time there was free hospitality all the day through in Heggelund's house. At the festive dinner-table sat magistrates, attorneys, clerks, the Dean, the minister and other guests, both numerous and from many places.

After their coffee, the authorities returned again to the court-room, where the witnesses were waiting, and the bailiff's clerks were collecting the taxes. One or more cases were heard, and then the court was declared closed for the day; for they had had a tedious and busy forenoon. Then came supper, and the card-tables were set out with toddy, ready-filled pipes, al-lumettes and ivory counters, and they sat and played until the chief magistrates retired to their rooms, leaving the rest of the party to their own pleasure.

Now and then the sheriff was obliged to go out and arrest one or more of the crowd who were disorderly or fighting, and put them in the temporary jail. It was said, one evening in the parlor, that Big Lars had gone crazy, and tried to attack the Russian Wassilieff. His madness had passed over, but, for safety's sake, the sheriff sent him away.

Next morning, when the busy session of the court was about to begin, players were still sitting at a couple of the card-tables. The clerk — one of those strange, rarely-gifted, tireless men, who are gradually dying out — went without difficulty from the card-table to his desk in the court-room below. He had not closed his eyes the whole night, but, ever on the alert, kept his pen going while one case followed the other without cessation through the busy morning and late into the afternoon.

The case of Jon Zachariasen and the Kven was fixed for the last day. Morten, who accompanied his father, had seen a great deal during the two previous days, and spent much time with Lyma and the family of Mathis Nutto, his old Finnish friend. He was still so inexperienced and young that the glories of the shop dazzled his eyes. He did not enter, for the one-eyed Stnwitz, with two assistants, were busy back and forth inside. But greater happiness than to be such a clerk — if there were only no Stuwitz there — he could not imagine.

He was not present when Big Lars was arrested, but looked on when he was put into the boat to be taken home, and was permitted to throw him his father's tobacco-box as a farewell greeting.

The third day the case of the Kven and Jon Zachariasen came up for trial.

Jon was called first, and then the Kven. They were both advised to confess and their punishment should be lighter. Among the crowd, not far behind his father, could be seen Morten's bright, now frightened face; and directly opposite Jon, on the bench next the jurymen, sat Stuwitz, leaning forward, with his hands clasped about his knees, listening attentively. To the exhortation for confession, Jon replied that he was an honest man, and ventured to add, with a long look at Stuwitz, that it would be well if every one present could say the same with truth. Stuwitz noticed the glance, which he evaded for a moment, and read in it that he must beware of the fellow.

Now came the witnesses, one by one. During their evidence the sweat streamed down Jon's brown face. Now and then he glanced sharply at Stuwitz, who, either intentionally or accidentally, never looked his way. At his side stood the Kven, silent and defiant. None of the witnesses had heard anything themselves, but each had been told by some other person, whom they sometimes named.

The last witness was a pale man, on whom Stu-

witz constantly fixed his eyes silently and almost threateningly. He declared, faintly and indistinctly, that he had recognized the rope in Jon's boat by a mark on the float. They were on the point of taking down this important piece of evidence, when Morten, who had the whole time been breathlessly listening, unconsciously cried out:

"Father! the boat-rope is fastened to the grapnel, so they can see it; it is the one we got in Sorstrom."

Then he ran out down to the boat, hauled up the grapnel, and took the rope to the court-room.

When it was shown in court, the witness, apparently bewildered by Stuwitz's angry looks, and no longer able to follow his directions, acknowledged that the rope was the same that he had spoken of; but it bore none of the mentioned marks, nor any sign of its ever having belonged to a net.

The sheriff beckoned Morten to him, and, as all would have done, stroked his yellow hair, and praised him for having shown himself such a clever boy, and finally gave him a new silver dollar.

As Stuwitz named other witnesses, the case was adjourned, to be held after Christmas, just before the fishing season, at the sheriff's office.

During the afternoon, Stuwitz, who was then alone in the shop, had a visit from old Mathis Nutto. He took an old wallet, full of bank bills, from his breast pocket, and picking out one of the bills, asked Stu-

witz to change it for him, meanwhile firmly holding the wallet in both hands, and refusing to approach the counter, upon which he had placed the bill. Stuwitz said that the bill was too old, and long since had been taken up by the bank; but cold drops of perspiration ran down his face, and he looked strangely pale when he thus replied.

The Finn now, in a louder voice and more threateningly, said significantly, that if he desired everything to go smoothly he had better be good enough to change all the bills. When Stuwitz tried suddenly to lock the shop door, the Finn quickly stepped in his way. Stuwitz then disappeared into his counting-room, and soon returned with a package of blue and yellow notes, which he slowly counted out on the desk, in exchange for those in the pocket-book.

But some of the notes, that Stuwitz eagerly sought to obtain, the Finn kept, hastily thrusting them into his bosom again and hurrying out.

It was afterward reported in Skorp Island that the case against the Kven was recalled. No one could suspect that this was Mathis Nutto's work; but Jon felt it to be a great injustice that he should be left alone to bear the blame.

For days after what had occurred at the summer court, Big Lars was fidgety and feverishly restless. He moved about filled with heavy thoughts, and as

if wearied of life. He would come home in the evening from the fishing-grounds without having thrown out his lines, and it was difficult to keep track of him.

One day, when Morten was out fishing with him, they saw what is rarely seen in those parts—a Russian sloop.

Big Lars was again suddenly attacked with a fit of madness. It was terrible to see him; and when he drew his knife, Morten thought that his life was threatened, and held the seat up before him for protection; but Lars only meant to cut loose the line that held them. The giant then took the oars, and rowed so fast, with long, steady strokes, straight ahead, that the oars bent like willow saplings, and the prow of the little boat was almost buried in the sea. His bloodshot eyes gazed fixedly out from the big pale face, set round with a thin grizzly-gray beard. At last the great beads of perspiration broke out on his forehead, and soon after he slackened his rowing, as if relieved. They had come so near that they could see that the boat was painted blue, and could distinguish people on board her.

The giant sat for a long time still, leaning over his oars. At last he heaved a heavy sigh, and looked at Morten, who, quite pale, sat in the stern. There was an expression of strange emotion on the strong face; and when Morten looked at him sympathet-

ically, he yielded to the need he felt of speaking out, although the young boy was scarcely old enough to be his confidant.

“It was at the time,” he said, “when Russians not only came to the towns of Finmark as now, but also traded for rye meal and dried fish along the coast, and there often lay a lodje (Russian vessel) in every cove.

“At a certain place, behind a promontory in the interior of Varangerfjord, lived a Finnish widow. She had a daughter as beautiful as ‘God’s sun.’” Here he paused, and repeated, softly, in broken tones,—“beautiful as God’s sun.”

“In a cot not two miles off lived a fellow who possessed only his two arms, but with them he could, when he would, row as far as any three men, or keep a twelve-oared boat against a head-wind. The two loved each other.

“Then a Russian vessel came into the bay, and the captain — his name was Wassilieff — saw that the widow’s daughter was beautiful. But when he could get her in no other way, he offered the mother seven bags of rye meal and some Russian crash in exchange for her daughter, and agreed to marry her in Russia.

“One day after, when they had raised anchor and lay ready to sail, the mother and daughter were invited to an entertainment on board, in the cabin. Shortly after, the lodje, with her sails all spread on

her three masts, glided before a gentle breeze out of the sound.

“When the mother sat alone in the boat, which was laden with sacks of rye meal and crash, the boy, who stood on the land, suspected something was wrong. He took an iron bar with him in his boat, and knew what he would do with it if the captain of the lodje did not get his dues.

“He rowed and rowed — they were younger and stronger strokes than those he took to-day. He kept on through the whole day and the light night, too; he could not feel his arms, which had long been numb, but only rowed while the heavy vessel kept steadily ahead. Once he saw her on deck, with her arms out, as if she cried to him in anguish, but then some one came from behind and violently pushed her down into the cabin again.

“With the rising sun came the morning breeze, and gave the lodje full speed. Then his rowing was of no avail; but the boy sat, as now, upon his oars, looking after her until the vessel’s sails disappeared beyond the horizon. For the daughter’s sake he did not kill the mother, as he had intended to do on the way home. He could work no more, and thought of putting an end to himself, but the Counselor, who for his good heart had lost all his money, saved him, and got him into service at Brogelmann’s.

“But two years after, a crazy woman, with a little

child on her arm, came on foot over the mountains from Russia. She had wandered long. Once she came home to her mother without the child. Then she lay sick and in delirium, and when the boy spoke with her she begged him, with a strange smile, to keep on rowing and he would yet reach her. The same night she wandered away over the mountains again in her madness.

“And now,” concluded Big Lars, with a weary sigh, “I believe I have rowed as long as I can!”

He could bear up no longer; ever more despondent in mind, and less coherent in action, he took an old leaky boat one day, after a land-storm, when the sea was calm, and rowed out to the fishing-ground, where he sat alone fishing. Suddenly those on land saw the ground-swell rush like a mighty white-crested sea-wall, and a little after break in foam, thundering along the strand.

Later in the afternoon the floating remains of the boat were washed up on the beach, but the body of Big Lars was never found.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BREASTPIN.

MARINA was now a middle-aged woman, and her hair slightly sprinkled with gray. But, though browned from exposure, and no longer lithe, a stranger would have been struck by her good features and something out of the common in her figure, and would have thought that she must have been exceedingly handsome in her youth.

Jon, from being on in years, and perhaps, also, from the unfortunate effect of his warm cap, was somewhat bald. The strong face, with its gray eyes, was marked and weather-beaten as the skerry covered with sea-weed, which the waves wash and the winds bite. His broad-shouldered form was bent, and he had the slouching gait which the Norland sailors acquire in a life spent constantly in a boat.

One day, when Marina and the children were out in the bright summer weather to fetch the hay from another part of the island, Jon was searching the large chest, where Marina's wedding-clothes also lay, for some money he had put away in one corner. As he felt across the bottom for a silver piece which had concealed itself between the clothes, he found, to his

astonishment, in the bridal cap, a bit of folded paper, and in it a gold breastpin. Holding it to the light, he read the initials T. S., and it occurred to him soon after that the name could be none other than Thor Stuwitz, who, before their marriage, had been so devoted to Marina.

The morning's sun shone warmly in at the open door, across the floor, upon the red-flowered chest, and fell full upon Marina's painted initials, as Jon, alone in the house, sat there, upon the edge of the chest, in deep thought, with the breastpin before him. He sat thus for an hour, and then another; his face grew darker and darker, and at last became ashen gray. He remembered their struggle to come together in youth, and how he had trusted her as his God, and their secret jubilee out on the fjord, after their return from church, when they sunk the presents to the bottom,—and now, after all these years, that he should find that there had been a lie between them!

Jon sat that day by the chest, and felt a part of his life's glory depart from him: he had not, then, possessed her heart fully and entirely. For a time he thought of speaking to her straight out about the matter, but after he had pondered over it his courage failed him, and at last he wrapped the ornament again in the old paper and put it in its place under the bridal cap.

Through the whole autumn he was gloomy and

silent, and Marina often secretly wondered what the trouble was with him.

In midwinter Jon was on his way to the traders' to sell their dried fish and buy his Christmas stores. He was heavy at heart; for, dark as it was on all sides, there was but little possibility of his gaining, at that time, his accustomed credit for his expensive outfit for the winter fisheries in February.

Since the day he sat on Marina's bridal chest all things had not been so easy for him to bear as before. Morten was among the crew of five men in the boat, Jon being captain, as usual. On starting out, they had cast their nets in the sound and drawn up a large shark, which had swallowed a cod that had caught the bait just before.

Big Lars had once said that this betokened bad weather, and his words were to be verified.

During the forenoon squall after squall came down from the mountains, increasing in violence, and it was necessary to hoist or lower the sails incessantly.

The sailing was particularly dangerous through the day, because the wind steadily moved eastward off shore. They were obliged, in spite of the heavy waves, to tack against the wind, with one gunwale under water, if they were to avoid the open sea and certain death. It was impossible to gain the lee of the shore again.

The first and no slight sacrifice demanded was for

each owner to throw half his fish overboard. The chill air caused the spray to form an ever-increasing sheet of ice over the boat, and it thereby became heavier and more unmanageable. An added danger appeared for a time as they came into a thick frost-fog, which made them uncertain of their course. Jon, therefore, stopped tacking and gave out her sail, thinking there was a possibility of their reaching Fuglo, or at least of clearing the fog, which latter they fortunately succeeded in doing. But the sea drenched everything, and the gale was so icy cold that they could not count upon the boat, with her weight of ice, being able to keep afloat through the night.

Morten, who had lynx eyes, insisted that he had twice seen white breakers in the distance, right in the tack of the sail, and shortly after the others also thought they, too, saw them. It might, perhaps, be Fuglo, but Jon, in his secret heart, thought it ten times more likely to be breakers seething about some reefs at sea.

The storm now suddenly veered to the northwest, with squalls, so that a heavy swell kept breaking astern of them, with full, fair wind. Now and then a close fog came on; heavy seas often washed both in and out of the boat; the scoop was in constant use, and the man at the prow had wet work. They had now gotten their reckoning, and would be able to gain Finholm — a deep-sea fishery belonging to Heg-

gelund, where there was a trading-post in the fishing season.

Outside the shoals which Morten had seen, and where the foamy breakers were suddenly dashed high in air with the dark storm-waves, like smoking chimneys, they saw an upturned boat, with three men on her keel beckoning for help. They could not hear their cries against the wind. The foremost man in Jon's boat was ready with a line, which he cast just as a heavy sea brought them near. Unfortunately, only the hindermost caught it and was drawn on board, while the two others were in danger of being driven onto the shoals.

Then Jon turned the rudder, and gave the word of command, "About ship," to the consternation of those with him, who were, however, obliged to shift the sail according to the rudder. They thought he had no right to risk heading her against the wind. The boat lurched, and the sea washed over her. When he had her sufficiently about he let her fall off again. He had determined to run his heavy, icy boat straight over the keel of the other, and stand his chance of colliding. He not only risked losing his rudder, but of being cut through as well.

Jon chose his moment in a masterly way. Just as his own boat rose and the other sank down in the trough of the waves, he sent his ten-oared craft straight over the keel, from which the unfortunate

men were taken on board, one on each side. Then they steered for Tenholm, and hoped to reach the port there for the night. One of the men was almost lifeless, while the two others lay in the bottom of the boat utterly exhausted. It was night when they at last discovered Tenholm. Outside the locked harbor there were, as is often the case in such places, several small reefs which birds inhabit; but during a storm the birds remain inside, covering all the cliffs like a living carpet. Jon vainly sought the entrance in the darkness; on every side he met the white breakers, and was obliged to keep off, the storm changing to the east again with a cold wind, and increasing in violence.

For a couple of hours they had thus tacked outside the reefs, in a struggle of life and death; then Jon felt that the craft, heavy with ice and nearly ready to sink as it was, left them no longer any choice. They must let her turn about, and steer straight on in the name of the Lord. The boat fell off, more sail was spread, and in she went at a whistling speed among the breakers, which soon dinned and thundered about them like a cataract. Shortly after, the boat, borne on the crest of a mighty wave, dashed on the beach with such force that the mast snapped down at the thwart.

Jon cast the grapnel successfully, lashed the cable firmly about the stern-knee, and sprang on shore just

as the wave receded, grasping the rope with one hand and Morten around the waist with the other. When the wave had spent itself, all the men stood on the beach, and drew the boat up far enough to escape the full force of the next sea.

They soon discovered that it was not Tenholm itself, but a rock lying outside, upon which they had landed. Now and then they fancied they saw a light from the trading-post within.

The storm was so violent on the reef that it was impossible to stand upright in the wind, and the spray dashed over it constantly. They succeeded at last in turning the boat over for a shelter, with the sail before the opening like the wall of a tent. They warmed themselves by lying close together, while one of the castaways, in whose stiff limbs they could discover no sign of life, was laid outside.

Morten muttered in his sleep occasionally, while Jon lay nearest the sail to keep him warmer. In the early part of the night, spite of his weariness, Jon had disturbing thoughts as he lay listening to the ever-increasing storm. If they had not reached land, they would have gone down outside; but here on the reef they were in danger of freezing to death. He thought bitterly how hard the Lord could make it for a poor man, and what a sorrowful Christmas-eve Marina would have, even if he reached home; for they would lack food, and their boy might also be poorly.

In his restlessness he lifted the sail to look out on the night. During the cold easterly gale the flickering starlight made it dazzlingly clear, which is peculiar to the winter sky of those northern regions. His eyes fastened upon a single golden star, large and brilliant, and shining more brightly than any of its mates. Morten lay muttering, half audibly, the words of a psalm which Marina had taught the children one Christmas, and Jon now repeated it silently to himself. It comforted him to lie and gaze at the clear light. Soon after, the sail dropped from his relaxed fingers, and he slept.

In the little trading-post that night, behind the barred shutters of the shop, sat old Stuwitz (as he was now commonly called,) making up his private accounts by the light of a tallow candle in a rusty candlestick. He was wont to sit up for a couple of nights every year in this way, when he went out to Tenholm before Christmas, to put the shop in order for the winter fisheries. It seemed to be less convenient for him to do this at home in Heggelund's house, and he always took it for night work.

That night he entered upon the debit side of his yearly account the sum he had been coerced to change for the mountain Finn. He sat with his elbows on the table, resting his big round head on his clenched hands, and his brownish red wig had slipped down over his blind eye. Certain things were passing in

review before his mind, and the tone of several short gutturals indicated that they were dark, unpleasant reminiscences which he still feared, rather than repented. His thoughts went back many years, clear up to the Finmark sea, where, like birds of ill omen, they settled awhile upon a sinking wreck. Stuwitz considered his difference with the Finn, who, by his repeated and persevering requisitions, had changed, in his estimation, to something more than a mere money-pump, for, so long as he retained any of the bills, he possessed proof which, even though the matter was so far back in its connection, might still be both serious and dangerous for him, if anything were really brought to light.

For many years, having steadily increased his fortune, Stuwitz felt himself to be on the safe credit side of life; his greatest passion was the secret knowledge that he was very rich, while his principal, Heggelund, with his lavish hospitality, would, in some years, perhaps, own nothing but his own skin. He had been creditor so many years, that he had long since forgotten the opposite position; in his eyes, a debtor had no rights.

Now, in his dispute for Finn Corner, which was undeniably worth a struggle, he had raised a weapon against himself which, if his luck should turn, might hurl him even lower down than to this despised round of the ladder. He was unspeakably troubled by this

risk, which at last presented itself to his clear head as a position so serious that his whole credit side was overbalanced by it.

While the storm whistled and beat about the window-shutters, now and then shaking the one-story building, Stuwitz sat pondering in the barred shop. The unusual influences of the night, perhaps, made him linger more than was his wont in these contemplations. His thoughts dwelt for a moment upon the time when, notwithstanding his full thirty-five years, he desired to marry the handsome Marina at Brogelmann's. The remembrance still stung him; but it soon gave way to the dark reflections which revolved about the Finn. He looked up an instant, as if listening—he seemed to hear shouts of distress; but they were not repeated, and, on such a night, no one could be saved. Shortly after, he was engrossed in his accounts, which he finished toward morning with a brilliant score—his ever-growing secret. As was his wont after such occupation,—which was, in fact, his yearly Christmas feast,—Stuwitz tried now to feel satisfied. He rose and paced the narrow floor to and fro, but soon seated himself again. Against the balance score was seen by him—at first faintly, afterward more distinctly—an interrogation point, which at last buried itself in the figures as a worm does in a nut. The man who lay down in the bed under the counter did not once feel a sensation of

happiness,—his sleep was disturbed, and he dreamed, amid the shocks of the storm, that something was wrong with the foundations of the house, which he sought in vain to have righted.

At nightfall the next day, Jon, with his beard frozen fast to his shirt, and an almost lifeless man on his back, came into the steaming-room, already partly filled by the crews of two other boats, which had also taken refuge on the islet. The rest of the men followed, more or less benumbed, bearing a dead body which was outside in the shed. The third of the rescued men was Heggelund's nephew, who had come some years before to the district, and was on his way out to the island with a provision of goods, which he was to trade out during the fishing season. He was now taken to his own room in the shop, and was soon perspiring in bed from the effects of a dose of brandy.

His companions undressed, hung their clothes over a pole near the fire to dry, and were soon dead asleep in the bunks. Some of the others were, meanwhile, out in the cold warehouse, working over the half-drowned man, and others sat about on the benches in the little room, scarcely able to see each other for the steam, eating from their boxes, or smoking leaf tobacco. Later in the evening, when the man had come to life, a merry fellow began to play on a harmonica, which he had bought for Christmas; but fatigue soon enforced its rights.

While the train-oil lamp dimly gleamed through the steam in the warm shop, where all slept the sleep of the weary, in bunks ranged around the walls, the storm continued its giant-like struggle without, where many were fighting in deadly peril.

Next day, when the sea was again navigable, after the forty-eight hours' storm, there was abundant proof of its disasters. A boat was seen outside, in the morning, circling about in a peculiar way. There were two men remaining from a crew of five, both exhausted, and rowing on the same side. One of them sank down as they approached the boat. Three others were dead. They had ridden out the storm that winter night by holding fast to their nets. On an unmanned keel, which floated in later in the day, they found five knives, and one broken off. It is customary to hold fast by one's tolle-knife, so that it was evident what had happened here.

As one of the rescued men was a relative of his principal, Stuwitz offered Jon credit at the shop; and said, also, that it was possible his case might be withdrawn from trial. Jon, pressed by need as he was, could hardly accept these offers from the hand of his deadly enemy; but there was something in Stuwitz's tone—probably intentional—which insinuated that Jon would scarcely have ventured the rescue if he had not seen a good speculation in it.

Jon therefore replied, shortly and gruffly, that what

he had done was not done for the sake of money, and Stuwitz could neither give nor take from him the opprobrium of thief,—that depended upon the authorities. With this he got himself ready and sailed for Sorstrom, where, contrary to his expectation, he obtained all the credit necessary for his winter outfit. The reason of this Jon did not learn, but the cause lay in a little envelope which young Andreas Heggelund, who had overheard his talk with Stuwitz, sent thither by one of the men in Jon's own boat.

When they reached home on Christmas-eve, they found Marina had suffered the greatest anxiety and suspense on account of the violent storm.

She was greatly delighted that Jon had got credit at Sorstrom, and also at his account of the rescue of the two capsized men. When she heard that he had been in at Stuwitz's, she crossed herself. She had herself to impart to him the intelligence of Isak Lovo's death, which they both felt keenly. But later on in the evening, after the Christmas candle was lit, and Marina told him what her foster-father had confessed to her, which she was now at liberty to repeat, and took the breastpin from her bridal cap, he drew her suddenly down upon his lap; she saw, to her surprise, that his eyes were wet. Her usually composed Jon was in such a state of emotion that she was frightened for a moment.

Morten could not understand what made his father so radiantly happy, but Marina soon managed to discover. He brought out his fiddle and played his only polka, while the children, Morten first, as the eldest, danced in turn with their mother, in a space they could scarcely turn around in. The fire crackled on the hearth, where the Christmas supper was cooking; the good things were served, and the Christmas candle,—a single one, which Marina had herself dipped,—was duly admired as it stood on the table. It cast no brilliant rays upon the small, dark window panes, but angels, celebrating that night with mortals, surely saw the light gleaming from the poor, low room on the mountain side out at sea.

That February, Morten went out to the great fisheries with his father for the first time. They worked half a ten-oared boat in company with a nephew of dead Isak Lovo, and had a passable haul.

In order to impress upon his memory the course, the lights, and the sea-marks, no fisherman ever omits telling his son the histories and folk witticisms which attach themselves to these, and which, once pointed out, seldom escape the mind of a Norland boy. That winter they went down as far as Rodo and the "Seven Sisters," in Helgeland. On the way home they passed underneath the "old watchman" in Lofoten, who can be seen up in a mountain fissure with his face toward

the northeast, and his legs astride the sail-yard, the light shining between them.

When they came home at Easter, Jon told Marina that Morten had shown himself much more capable than the ordinary "young scion,"—as they call a boy the first year he goes to the fisheries,—and he had still two or three years as a sea-gull (another term for a boy).

The incident of Jon's having rescued Andreas Heggelund that stormy day, by sending his femborning (ten-oared boat) straight over the capsized boat, had by that time reached many distant places. It was a venture which forced admiration even from those who would assert that such a thing had been heard of before. The little thick sheriff Ravn, with his official air, went about for two whole years, "considering," as he said, whether he should recommend Jon's name for a medal; when he at last determined to do so, he found that the affair was of too long standing.

This event had been a topic of much consideration in the Heggelund family. It had awakened a certain amount of attention outside, and to evince their gratitude was not only natural, but also, in some respects, a point of honor with them. Jon refused all offers of money, and it was then decided that Andreas Heggelund should go and offer Morten a place in the shop, with the promise of promotion if he deserved it.

Jon and Marina felt that they ought not to reject this offer; but when Andreas Heggelund insisted upon Morten's returning with him at once, Marina expressed her wish that he should be left for a short time to take leave of his home. The truth was that she wanted to make him some new clothes, as she told Jon, that the boy might not appear too shabby when he presented himself in that fine house.

The next fortnight there was a rush of work in the little room. Jon's Sunday clothes were made over for Morten, and each garment in its new form was admired by his younger brothers and sisters, whose attention was divided between their mother, as tailoress, and the shoemaker, who had been sent for from Skorp Sound, and now sat stitching upon the new shoes. Jon had long since prepared the leather, and they knew the shoes would be uncommonly water-tight.

While she sewed, Marina was irresolute in her thoughts about confiding to Morten the discoveries they had made concerning her birth. Morten, in his new relation, ought not to be ignorant of the suspicion she felt, that Stuwitz perhaps had a life account to settle with her. Back of all this, an undefined thought that her son might possibly gain some new light on the matter, invisible from Skorpen, influenced her.

After repeated consultations with Jon, Morten was

taken into confidence on the day before his departure, while out with his mother—he was to cross over with a neighbor. She also gave him many admonitions about his behavior there,—how he should bow, and not sit down when the mistress was in the room, and other rules of conduct which might prove useful.

When she accompanied him down to the boat, she wept bitterly. Jon said less; he only took the solemn promise from his son that he would never get drunk, and would always be an honest fellow, no matter how hard it might be.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT HEGGELUND'S.

MANY stories circulated among the peasants concerning Gjo Heggelund's "boundless wealth." He was said to have, down in the bank at Trondhjem, as many tens of thousands of dollars standing in rows as he owned church shares and fisheries; and every year, when the church tithes were paid, it was said that his attic was filled with silver coins.

In his great white house, with its many small-paned windows, and the green-trellised garden in front, in which stood his flagstaff, with a battery of brass cannon at its foot, every man knew he was welcome, and the only difficulty was in being released from his pressing hospitality.

At Christmas, the house was the self-constituted center of festivity for all, who were on Sundays clad in frock coats, in the district. The festivities continuing for twenty days, and often longer, visits were ostensibly made to Marcus Heggelund, but really to his wife, who, more than fifty years old, and with her elegant gray puffs of hair, instead of the former black ones, presided over the hospitalities of her home, and not a little over the district as well. All were unanimous that a more comfortable house,

or more friendly people than the Heggelunds, could not be imagined.

Mrs. Heggelund was, in her way, a strict disciplinarian; she felt a somewhat ostentatious pride in her great thrift, which kept her army of servants always busy. The beds were all supplied at home, and the feather-beds filled with the finest eider-down from her husband's own breeding-grounds. A loaded table stood nearly all the day in the dining-room, and the house and servants' hall were each in charge of a housekeeper.

The rooms, which at that time were considered remarkable, would not satisfy the demands of the present. They were rather low, with whitewashed beams running across, bent by the weight of the roof, and many names might have been read scratched upon the small window-panes by the rings or brooches of the guests,—a list more entertaining than ornamental.

It was generally said that when there was no company in the house, Heggelund himself suffered intense depression, but strangers would not notice this.

In his liberal charity and hospitality, Marcus Heggelund united two especially Norland characteristics, which could not fail to make him beloved by the people. The district felt itself in a manner honorably represented by his house.

The story was told also of his anger when the

steamship *Constitution* came up to Norland for the first time, and steamed directly past his trading-post, where all was prepared for a festive reception of captain and passengers with flags and salutes. The guest-chambers were in order, and all in readiness for at least a three days' visit.

From the day when the steamer's course proved so inconsistent with all good Norland customs and hospitality, Heggelund was always of the decided opinion that a steamer would only frighten the fish away from the grounds. He insisted, also, that he would agree to sail down the "great marvel" with his best ten-oared boat, in a good three-reefed breeze. This piece of bravado was actually carried out the next summer, on a favorable occasion. For a stretch of twenty-one miles, from K—— Cape to Andholm, inside the rocks, where he knew the stream better than the captain, he and his nephew, Andreas, sailed before a spanking breeze, leaving the *Constitution* far in the rear. But the beating of a steamship by a Norland boat was considered a patriotic victory by both high and low, and Marcus Heggelund's name was sounded with greater popular fame than ever.

Elias Rost, who lived near by on a little spot called Andersvig, and who built the boat, also gained great credit far and wide, and Heggelund sent him a silver mug.

Long, lame Elias Rost, with his cushioned crutch

and quaint brass tobacco-box, which could be used both for a square and a carpenter's rule, was quite a notable man for one in his position. He had carried on boat-building and carpenter work about the country for nearly thirty years, and was considered a master of his trades. Like many people there since Peder Das' time, he wrote songs, both sacred and secular, which were printed in Bergen, and bought by the Norland sailors when down there selling their fish. He spoke with a sharp and dreaded tongue against those he disliked, but it was well known that he did not mean all he said, after having relieved his feelings. He was godfather to half the parish, and always had plenty of news to relate, so that both old and young were delighted whenever he was expected at the farm.

Heggelund's two small daughters were his eager listeners as he stood at work down in the boat-house, and told them all manner of stories. He had some peculiar ideas of his own, which they craftily sought to draw from him, and afterward repeated for the amusement of those at home. It was especially concerning Bible doctrine, for Elias was a diligent reader of that holy book. He was considered a very intelligent man, and was much attached to the Heggelund family.

When Elias Rost heard, down in the boat-house, that Heggelund had beaten the Constitution with

his ten-oared boat, he sat lost in thought for a long time, twirling his snuff-box in his fingers. As he resumed work he said: "Well, I believe modern notions will win for all that; but they must look well to the currents, too!"

Since Brogelmann's death, Counselor Tobias Storm had lived a lonely life for some years, on a pleasant farm, where he lodged very cheaply. When not out on his lonely wanderings by the sea, he usually sat at a table under the small, high window, reading or lost in mournful reflections. The discovery of the bills in Bergen struck him as much stronger proof against Stuwitz than it did the authorities, and he could never rid himself of the idea that there were still unrevealed mysteries concerning the wreck.

This sentiment gradually left its impress on his face in a quiet, introspective look, which made him appear more obtuse to his surroundings than he really was, and gave him a strange *distrain* manner.

In the neighborhood he was considered a singular person, whom it was difficult to understand. As he was seen in uniform and came from the far north, the peasants inferred that he was one of those persons from Copenhagen whom the people believe are "doomed" to walk the beach. Being too distinguished for ordinary punishment, they are sentenced by the king to walk, at certain hours of the day, up and down the beach at Varangerfjord.

His need for occupation, or perhaps the feeling that he must try to rid himself of the one thought which constantly haunted him, induced him to endeavor to create other interests, and laid the foundation of his love for reading. He busied himself, also, with a mechanical invention—a machine for raising small articles from the bottom of the sea; it was lowered by a rope,—but he did not succeed with it. He once wrote about it. to Heggelund, and this was the means of his becoming an inmate of their home, as Mrs. Heggelund welcomed her old friend. He went by the name of Counselor, from his old title of Counselor of the Exchequer, but he was generally called “Uncle Tobias” by the members of the family.

The lonely old man usually sat in his chamber. Now and then one of the little girls would come to him with her affairs. He had read with them, and thus a confidential understanding had been gradually established between them and him.

Edel was his especial favorite. She must always run up and confide to Uncle Tobias whatever she had at heart; and this habit continued after she had grown up. When she sometimes happened to mention Stuwitz, his mood always changed, and she tried to guard herself in this.

Uncle Tobias knew much of what was going on in the house, which she thought he had not noticed, and she often wondered about it. When

she came from the office, and her father had been down-hearted, he always asked how he was, and whether Stuwitz had been there. She did not understand that he could read her face.

One afternoon in June our seventeen-year-old Morten stood on Heggelund's landing, equipped in his new glazed hat, new blue woolen jacket, his father's watch, and the brass chain outside his vest. He had thanked the men in the boat for their good company, and was now somewhat doubtful and perplexed as to how he ought to direct his steps, whether through the garden to the house, or by the nearer right-hand road leading to Stuwitz in the shop.

His mother's silk kerchief gave the otherwise countrified-looking boy, who stood gazing about him in uncertainty, quite the air of a sailor. He had apparently grown rapidly, and this fact had evidently been duly considered in the make of his clothes, but the blue-eyed determined face, though boyish still, was not one to long retain a look of uncertainty or indecision. It surprised him only that his mother, who had thought of so many things in advance, should not have fallen upon this, the very first difficulty. His action was determined with a sharp turn, such as he was wont to make in directing the boat, for the shop and Stuwitz were the first shoal he wished to steer clear of. But at the garden gate he paused

again; it was not to be denied that he could hear the beating of his heart. Merry shouts of laughter sounded from within. He listened a moment, and then resolutely entered.

Morten came just at the right moment. A dark-haired, over-grown, slender young girl, with blind-folded eyes, from which she was evidently trying to peep, came running at full speed across the lawn straight toward him, and laughing, grasped him by his jacket collar. She called him Andreas, and would not let him loose before he had taken off her blinder. A moment after, several others sprang from behind the hedges and formed a ring around them, dancing "Cut the Oats," amid much merriment. Had Morten had time, he might possibly have thought that his mother had not provided him against this emergency either; but now, standing in the midst of the circle, and held fast by the young girl, he was far too busy to think. When, after some effort, the maiden at last succeeded in freeing herself from the blinder, she was apparently, on her part, not pleasantly surprised. There was a look of wounded pride in her face, and she was evidently ready to cry.

The offended look she gave Morten, while the others only redoubled their merriment, made him blush scarlet. He turned quickly to go, when a familiar voice a little distance off shouted:

"Why, it's Morten, our new clerk."

It was Andreas Heggelund, who now came sauntering up from his hiding-place behind the hedge. Without giving further heed to the game, he drew Morten toward the house to pay his respects to Heggelund and his wife.

They were entertaining a large company. While the elders sat in the parlor a part of the younger folks were romping in the garden. Edel, the youngest daughter of the house, was blindfolded, and Andreas had hit upon the joke of all hiding themselves.

Hat in hand, and led by his friend, Morten passed through two rooms filled with guests—part of them chatting, others playing cards—into a smaller one, where Mrs. Heggelund was seated on a sofa, by the side of another lady. As they approached, Andreas pressed his hand significantly, and whispered:

“Bow low,—real low!”

And Morten made the long, low, scraping bow which his mother had taught him, bending so low that his hair fell over his eyes, first before one lady and then the other, who was the wife of the district judge, and in many respects the rival of Mrs. Heggelund.

“This is Morten Skorpen, who has come to be our shop-boy,” explained Andreas, somewhat low, and stammering a little. By his aunt’s glance he discovered that this same Morten did not, for that

moment at least, interest everybody as warmly as himself.

The mistress looked critically at Morten for a moment, as if surprised at the interruption.

He, on his side, had, during his bashful reverence, admired at close proximity, in his simple-hearted way, the heavy gold chain and silk dress, which he had seen before, at a distance, in church.

“My dear, would not this matter more nearly concern Stuwitz, or the housekeeper? She will show the young man to his room.”

Morten attempted another bow, but it was not so low as the first. Then Mrs. Heggelund asked, as if it had just occurred to her:

“Is your father’s name Jon?”

“Yes—thank you!” Morten felt that his “yes” was somewhat curt, and accordingly ventured an addition.

“He who so bravely saved Andreas!—Yes, but then your name is Morten Jonsen. We will call you Jonsen. The other name, whatever it was, does not sound well.”

With these words she nodded more graciously on dismissing him. Morten bowed and followed his companion, who mumbled something about style, and found a chance on the way out to drown his discomfiture in a glass of punch, which he snatched from a table. They found Heggelund sitting at a

card-table, where Morten also recognized Dean Muller. His nephew made shorter work of it here, saying, somewhat ironically:

“Uncle, may I present an individual whose name, two moments since, was Morten Skorpen, but who has been rechristened Hr. Jonsen?”

His uncle was too much absorbed in his game to give attention for the moment; he only caught something about a christening, and said:

“What say you, Andreas? Is there to be a christening?”

“There has already been one, uncle.”

“Where?”

“Just now, in aunt’s room; the child is pretty well grown. He is Morten Skorpen, who, for the future, is to be called Jonsen.”

Heggelund took Morten cordially by the hand, and said that he remembered his parents well. With these words he smiled peculiarly as he dealt the cards; he was probably thinking of what occurred at that time.

The Dean, meanwhile, with his glasses pushed up over his brow, half turned in his chair and sat looking attentively at Morten. At last he asked, as if puzzling about something:

“Your mother’s name is Marina?”

Morten assenting, he broke off the conversation and gave his attention to cards. But that other thoughts

were passing through Dean Muller's head, was evidenced by his wild playing. It was to him that Isak Lovo, on his death-bed, had confessed the secret of Marina's birth. He had often pondered over it in his own mind, being bound to secrecy, and it struck him now that her son was in the way of rising from his humble position. Morten interested him, and later in the evening, when they rose from the card-table, he went to the corner, where the boy had been modestly standing since Andreas left him, and talked with him of his home and prospects. Morten felt that he had happened upon a kind friend, and desolate as he felt himself to be amid all these strange people, this feeling had an excellent effect upon him.

Morten's round with Andreas stopped on coming to a little man in blue uniform, with gold cord about the collar, who sat alone with his pipe in a rocking-chair. It was Uncle Tobias, or, as he was also called, the Counselor. He seemed too deep in his own meditations to take special notice of the presentation,—at least Morten could discover no signs of interest.

Andreas Heggelund, who was used to his manner, seemed fully satisfied, and bade Morten stay there until he returned. Here in the corner, which, in spite of the noisy company, was quiet and deserted, Morten had little else to do but watch Uncle Tobias as he sat nodding over his pipe. There were contradictions about the man which Morten was unable

to understand. His uniform was new and handsome, and his hair black and glossy as a youth's,—Morten had no notion of a wig,—while his face was old and closely wrinkled. In spite of his respect, he could not help thinking that it must be pure imbecility which gave the gray eyes that fixed, staring look into vacancy. He did not draw a single puff of smoke the whole time, and this gave the always thoughtful Morten a good idea: he took flint, steel and tinder from his pocket, and struck fire as carefully as he could in the hollow of his hand. With a respectful bow, he laid the burning tinder in the pipe, whose stopper he ventured to open. The old man understood his good intention and puffed at it, mumbling his thanks over the mouthpiece; and, for a moment lifting his eyes to Morten, life came suddenly into his face as he gazed. At last he asked:

“What's your name?”

“Morten, from Skorpen.”

“Hm!—hm!—remarkable!” And after a couple of “hm, hm's” he sat nodding over his pipe as before, forgetting to smoke; but Morten noticed that the old man's eyes gave long side-glances at him and he suspected that possibly he was not so stupid after all,—a suspicion which was confirmed later, while living at the house,—for he found that the old man, when he would, both heard and saw.

A moment after, young Edel came with a glass

of punch, which she said she had prepared on purpose for her uncle. She tapped him lovingly on the shoulder and asked how he was getting on, and if Andreas had not been with him. It seemed that she was very happy in him, and he in her.

Morten drew modestly to one side, and was fortunate enough not to be noticed.

She reached him the glass, saying:

“Drink it now, Uncle Tobias, or you will forget it, you know. I will tell you a funny story up in your room.”

When she had gone, Morten struck a light for him again, which seemed to gratify the old man; he even reached out his pipe himself for a repetition of the favor.

In the course of an hour Edel came back to accompany him to his room. As she took him under the arm to lead him up, he turned his head and gave a friendly nod to Morten. She then noticed him for the first time, and bowed, flushing slightly as she did so. Morten did not doubt that her funny story was about his adventure in the garden, and it annoyed him not a little.

At the supper table, Andreas, who was now very merry and gay, was attentive to him, and straightway after bade him go to bed in his own room. He himself came up very late.

Morten felt the day might have been better.

While sleeping in his soft bed, many confused impressions glided through his mind: the dark-haired girl held him fast in the garden, and then looked haughtily offended; Fru Heggelund, with her gold chain, sat on the sofa and tossed her head, calling him first "an affair which concerned Stuwitz," and then more graciously "Jonsen"; but the handsome, gray-haired Dean took him so kindly by the hand at last that his heart felt it, and he dreamed about his home on Skorpen.

CHAPTER IX.

BEHIND THE COUNTER.

WHEN Morten dressed himself early the next morning, in the comfortable little attic chamber, Andreas still slept soundly next to the wall. Right opposite his window, across the sound, stood the steep verdure-clad mountain in the glow of the morning sun, which, after a little, crept down the masts of the two yachts that lay moored without the landing.

No one was stirring about at the shop in the early gray of the morning.

Out on the calm waters of the sound, metallic-green to its very depths from the reflection of the leafy mountain, a couple of peasants were rowing their boats with sparkling oars. Midway a yacht with flapping sail appeared, which had vainly waited for the morning breeze, and was now being towed by the crew.

To Morten's surprise, young Heggelund's clothes were thrown about in disorder. His watch still hung in his vest, and one of his boots lay near Morten's bed, while the other was jammed against the door, as if violently thrown or kicked there. After placing

the things on a chair, and putting the watch on the small table near the bed, he went downstairs. The mistress's words about his "concerning Stuwitz," and other impressions of the previous day, had decided him to present himself to the latter as soon as the shop opened. He thought how much he might have escaped if he had at first taken the road from the landing he least liked.

After some fumbling about, he found his way down to the hall, and took the path through the garden. At the spot where he had made an entrance, so unlucky in his own estimation, Morten nodded to himself, and called to mind that here the young miss had looked upon him for a moment as if she had soiled her hands by contact with the peasant-boy, and hurried down to the shop, where he knew he was in his proper place.

As he approached, the landing-boy, with whom he saw Stuwitz speaking, was just opening the shop door.

Morten went straight to Stuwitz, who stood in a greasy coat, with his wig in one hand and a blue checked pocket-handkerchief in the other, with which he was wiping his face, after helping the man to roll a large barrel upon the platform at the door.

Morten took off his hat and bowed to old Stuwitz as he had been taught.

"Good day!—what do you want?" exclaimed Stu-

witz, harshly, while his one dull eye with the white spot in the pupil quivered slightly.

“I am Morten, from Skorpen, whom they have offered a place here!”

“Ah—indeed!” he said, in a peculiar, changed tone. I thought you were going to stay up at the house with the fine people; it is very common down here, I can tell you.”

Morten felt that the smiling face and soft voice boded him no good; he could only dispute them by deeds, and asked modestly:

“Is the oil-barrel to go into the shop?”

“It isn’t oil, it’s syrup,” was the surly reply. But Morten, uncowed, continued:

“Is the syrup-barrel to go in?”

“Hm—yes!”

“Can I do it?”

“To be sure; but first take that new jacket off; we are not so fine down here.”

Morten did so, and thus made a lucky spring into the day’s work, for they were busy enough later in the shop, as it was Saturday, and they had many customers.

While Stuwitz, constantly occupied, was now down at the warehouse, or on board one of the yachts under lading, again in the counting-room, or stood bargaining with people, Morten and two other clerks were busily occupied at the counter, and later in the

day, Andreas Heggelund also came in to help. The variety of wares which peasants fetch—fish and livers, new boats, skin bed-covers, down to such small things as berries in wooden boxes,—must all be chaffered about in detail, and payment made in goods from the shop. A chosen few of “old acquaintance” were invited by the first clerk into the warehouse near by, and pressed with a glass of liquor, of a better sort than the mixture which Stuwitz always superintended the making of, and sold as wine.

But Morten soon perceived that this was prompted by other motives than those expressed in the friendly words and special greetings to their families at home; and he remembered with a peculiar feeling that his father had several times returned from Sorstrom with similar greetings.

He had managed to learn the prices of certain current wares, and his knowledge increased every hour. He felt very grand in his new position behind the counter, especially when he cut the knot after tying a package, took a handful of raisins out, or put the scoop into the sugar-drawer for some acquaintance of his, and the weights in the scale he balanced to a hair.

They importuned him to lower the price, but he declared seriously that it was absolutely impossible for them to sell cheaper. He afterward ventured an expression which he caught from the first clerk, and which sounded to him in the highest degree business-

like,—to “warrant” some certain breastpins and rings in a glass case, which, as they glistened on the cotton, seemed no less beautiful to him than to the admiring girl on the other side of the counter. But he said nothing about the fine blue English flies, which he knew to be fragile, from his own experience out on the fishing-ground,—only tried in a quiet way to advance the stronger white ones.

Breakfast was sent down to the clerks, and in the hurry they were obliged to spell each other for the twelve o'clock dinner, in a corner room up at the house, which was separate from the other dining-room where the guests were now taking breakfast. But to Morten even this short interruption seemed too long, and had he not been ashamed, he would gladly have gone without his dinner in order to remain below in the shop.

Later, he was charged to hail a coaster from the landing and board her with a message to the captain from Stuwitz; and as he stood in the stern of the boat with the steering oar, while the boatmen rowed, and afterward turned respectfully to make it easier for the “clerk” to gain the ladder, he felt more sensibly than ever, if possible, his position in the world. He took it with an assumed matter-of-fact air, like one who has much to do, and little time for unnecessary talk, but thanked the man for a service just as he would have done before.

Chance would have it that Morten, almost feverishly absorbed in his new occupation, should also on that day get a foretaste of another side of his new life. A poor peasant, whom a long protracted illness had made destitute, presented himself to Stuwitz, and, in consideration for his many years' trade and honest payment, asked for seventy-two pounds of flour on credit. He had been there the week previous and pleaded in vain. Now he had with him his wife, who looked no less wretched than himself. The man declared in a choked voice that they had not a handful of meal in the house for their seven children. Stuwitz curtly and harshly recommended them to the poor-box. But Morten was much moved by the sight, remembering the sorrowful time at home of which his mother had told him, when his father lay for a long time ill, and Stuwitz had likewise refused them credit. He was just on the point of cutting a string under his vest, and giving his only silver coin, which he had brought from home — an eight-cent piece, with an imprint of the king's face, and a hole in it, "which would still the blood," and carried luck with it — when Andreas Heggelund, pale with anger, leaped over the counter and bade them go with him up to the house. Stuwitz turned his back, but cast looks of inexpressible scorn after him. An hour later the two passed the shop with several bundles, supplied, it seemed, beyond all their expectations.

Later in the afternoon, Andreas returned to the shop again and requested powder, as they were to fire a salute from the battery by the flagstaff in honor of the Judge's departure. He always superintended this matter, and wanted Morten to join him; but Morten had sufficiently learned the rules of the house no longer to follow Andreas Heggelund through thick and thin, amiable and agreeable though he seemed to him; and strange to say, he had the strongest aversion to leaving the shop, even for a moment. He continued actively busy in it until the last customer was disposed of and the shop finally closed in the evening. In the late, bright night the landing was again deserted by men and boats,—the last one was just rowing across—the big keys were turned in the warehouse doors, and the landing-boy was still putting things in order here and there.

He ate supper with the two clerks, and slept in the same room with the younger one. But this time Morten's satisfaction with his day was of a different character. He had now obtained his most ardent wish, to become a clerk; nor had he imagined that it could be half so pleasant, and for a long time he could not sleep, thinking of the shop, and longing for Monday, when he should resume work again.

On Sunday it seemed as if a seven-day sleep had fallen upon the house. Except a few more of the

men-servants, who appeared with hair still wet from combing, in Sunday clothes, with one or two watch-chains displayed outside their vests, and holiday pipes in their mouths, but few were up before the church-boat was ready at the landing; and no haste was made, as the priest would willingly wait his service a little, when necessary, for the Heggelund family. Morten had seen Edel in the garden two hours before, with her friend the Judge's daughter, a few years older than herself, who had remained for a visit; and he noticed also that Andreas, in his shirt-sleeves, sat in the attic window, apparently watching them intently.

The Sunday breakfast and dinner were eaten with the family in the parlor; but as each person came to the morning meal according to inclination, it happened that Morten and his comrades ate alone. He heard Andreas in the next room laughing with the young ladies, and fearing they might come in, he hurriedly finished his meal.

Some time after, all the family and the two clerks went down to the great boat, in which five of the men-servants, dressed in their best, were already seated at their oars, and their jackets lay beside them on the seats. The other domestics, who had waited at the landing, then stepped in. As the flag-decked boat was rowed from the landing, he saw Edel and her friend making a shelter of their parasols,

probably the better to protect themselves from Hr. Andreas, who sat close beside them.

Old Stuwitz was also dressed for Sunday, in his own peculiar fashion, in coarse home-made clothes, from which the legs of his greased boots protruded, an ill-fitting crumpled shirt-front, which disappeared in his thick woolen neckcloth, and again projected askew against his ears in two sharp-pointed "paricides." * He looked solemnly morose, and in his old-fashioned, low-crowned silk hat, with his fists in his pea-jacket pockets, from one of which a checked cotton handkerchief protruded, he took, as usual, his lonely Sabbath walk into the country. On his return from his walk, the clerks said, it was his habit to go into the warehouse, where he stayed till dinner-time, and then it was wise to keep out of his way, for he was always sulky.

Morten was now as good as alone in the house, and could look about the rooms more at his ease. He came across Jomfru Dyring, the old housekeeper, to whom he gave his parents' greetings, and at last became so friendly with her that she offered him an extra bite from the pantry,—for it might be a long time before they returned from church, and "young folks must have their food." Morten had no sus-

* Paricides=standing collars; so called because a father once had his eyes put out by the points of his son's collar, when hastening to welcome him home with a kiss.

picion that this was not the old woman's habitual way of speaking.

Jomfru Dyring, with her false black curls and pale, thin, severe face, trimly set around by a lace cap, was the untiring police of the house, of whom all were afraid. Her suspicious, searching eyes, under their drooping lids, watched like a falcon's for everything that related to the order of the house or the servants, and she always pounced down when one least expected it.

Mrs. Heggelund, to whom the neat, precise Jomfru Dyring was indispensable, and in whose presence she wisely retired into the background, would never see a fault in her, but always took her part without question. On this point Stuwitz, even, had no influence, though otherwise he was secretly all powerful. The stairs of the great house were her cape *finisterræ*. The shop, warehouse, and all that concerned them, did not exist for her, and their absolute master, Stuwitz, was equally invisible to her when he was inside the house. One might have noticed that she always kept on his blind side. No one had ever seen the two exchange a word, but Stuwitz mumbled, often in no friendly way, when she brushed past him. She could never find time to go to church, as she had so much to attend to at home. She liked to add sharply that "they would some time have to carry her there."

Luckily for Morten, he knew nothing of this in advance, or he would scarcely have talked so confidently and frankly with this dreaded personage. With no suspicion of danger, he had penetrated the hedge of bitterness on which others scratched themselves, and behind which she really felt like some lonely bird. His lively, trustful way fell like a sudden sunbeam into an old dark, damp garden, long closed, and from that day forth she was always much interested in him. The fact that her enemy, Stuwitz, had opposed his coming, and persecuted his parents, increased, no doubt, her interest in him. Whatever her mood might be—and it was always more or less stern—she had ever a mild face for Morten, and, what was later of great service to him, always a clever word at the right time in his defense.

Morten also went on board the sloop, with whose captain he had become acquainted the previous day, and with whom he sat chatting for some time in the cabin in an unusually interesting talk about the wonders of a Bergen trip. The strong tobacco with which he had been treated, and which he smoked manfully at first, began to have an effect meanwhile, and he took leave and went on shore before the exciting theme was nearly exhausted.

The church-boat returned later on in the afternoon, and, as usual on church Sundays, when the

weather was fine, the minister's whole family, with other guests, returned with them.

Little Counselor Storm, in his uniform, occupied a prominent place at the dinner-table. Fru Heggelund used him as a decoration. Beside him sat his friend Edel, always ready to hand him what he wanted. To Morten's astonishment, Stuwitz filled quite a subordinate position in the house. He was seated at the lower end of the table, scarcely spoke a word during the meal, rose from the table, bowed, and left before the rest had finished, and with few exceptions behaved thus during the first year that Morten was in the house; afterward he kept house for himself.

During dinner the atmosphere was somewhat oppressive.

Hr. Andreas, who disregarded all rules, had, on the return home, committed various sins. The tall, pale daughter of the Judge sat with two roses in her cheeks, evidently not caused by pleasure alone, and the mistress preserved an unusually solemn, church face, and remarked, not at all in connection with the general conversation, that the minister had delighted them all by his edifying discourse. She was reminded of one person who had, unfortunately, just the faults mentioned. "God grant he may only take it to heart!" she sighed, looking as if anything else was more probable.

A sort of affirmative growl was heard from the other end of the table. It came from Stuwitz, who had just risen and was passing out. He had not been to church, but hated the young man in question too heartily to withstand adding his assent.

“Yes, God grant it, dear aunt,” said Andreas, who had free speech in the house, casting anything but a friendly glance at the door through which Stuwitz had just disappeared; “but the greasy old animal is too old to change his ways now; neither will he ever go to church.” He assumed, with an innocent air, the belief that his aunt referred to Stuwitz.

But later he received a severe reprimand from his aunt—and a ten-dollar bill from his uncle.

In the evening, Edel spoke a few words with Morten. She inquired if he liked being in the shop, and why he had not accompanied them to church.

To the first question Morten answered yes, and to the second, that no one had invited him to go. She looked at him somewhat doubtfully, as if wondering what he meant by this, and asked suddenly, approaching him sympathetically:

“You did not expect your parents at church?”

“No;—then I should have begged permission.”

The young girl turned away, smiling faintly, to go upstairs with Uncle Tobias. In her chamber, she

said, as if replying to the thoughts she had had while climbing the stairs:

“That young clerk must be very proud.”

Morten, on his side, thought that she had a very lovely expression in her eyes when she asked about his parents, but afterward her glance was a little offensive;—she was evidently very like her mother.

CHAPTER X.

BEHIND THE COUNTER — *continued.*

MORTEN'S unusual talents and straightforward ways made him trusted; so it happened, after the first two years, that his advice was asked concerning things outside his sphere, though by Stuwitz always in an ironical tone. He had discovered the young man's chief weakness,—a good share of vanity and reliance on his own powers.

Stuwitz's connection with the house was a very remarkable one. The stoutly built man with the almost brutal face shrank into insignificance when in the presence of Heggelund and his wife, while his importance expanded again just as noticeably in the shop.

He apparently felt uncomfortable, oppressed and powerless when with the family, as if conscious that he was not in the presence of friendly powers, except when with the mistress; for, besides Jomfru Dyring, Uncle Tobias's quiet manner revealed this in many ways. When Heggelund addressed him, it was oftenest in a hard, constrained way, otherwise not habitual with him. He would call Stuwitz to him with a careless motion of his pipe, as he sat on the sofa, and

Stuwitz would stand before him almost in the attitude of a menial; or, with a patronizing air, would tap him on the shoulder, with a "My dear Stuwitz, will you do me the favor?" and turn about as if the reply were self-evident. Old Stuwitz, on his part, would bow most respectfully; but when down in the warehouse again, he would walk about for hours, with his hands thrust deep in his pockets, grumbling or whistling, and his one gray eye shooting darts at the house above, while the other, weak and scarred, quivered with excitement. Now and then he would kick, as at something invisible, to demolish it with his foot.

When Morten had come to feel at home in the house, he found that there was a difference of opinion between Heggelund and his wife as to the treatment of Stuwitz; for she sought—quite contrary to her nature—to make amends for her husband's manner by various kindnesses. It was a tender point, on which she could not influence her husband.

For the rest, old Stuwitz was not entirely destitute of all good qualities, and he could be extremely obliging to any one who pleased him. One must, however, make it evident that he "sided with the warehouse."

He had also, when he chose, a real talent for tormenting his subordinates, and was unwearied in this role toward Morten. He did this in a peculiar

premeditated manner, difficult to combat, but which caused every little fault to be dilated upon as a silent proof of how untrustworthy the boy really was. When Stuwitz was offended,—and with his inhuman, bitter nature, this happened on the most incredible grounds,—he swallowed his discomfiture instantly; but one might rest assured that, though hidden, it was not forgotten.

One autumn, on their return from the semi-annual market in Bergen, where Morten had hitherto accompanied them, the current price of the year for fish was mentioned at table by Stuwitz. He spoke of its being so miserably low, at which Morten innocently mentioned several people whom he knew had obtained higher rates than those of the official price-list given by Bergen merchants. Heggelund turned very white, but said nothing. From that time on, when Stuwitz could not prevent Morten's trips to Bergen, he kept him as far as possible outside of all business matters there.

Next year, before starting for Bergen, Morten suggested to Heggelund that by rigging a pulley they might dispense with half the crew of fourteen men then necessary to hoist the heavy square sail. Heggelund thought well of the idea, and began to feel a certain pride in being the first in Norland to introduce the new reform in their boat service. But he ran aground on Stuwitz, who took the proposition very ill, especially

as connected with Morten, saying that he had himself both years and experience enough to understand the thing far better than a presumptuous, big-mouthed youngster who was ever blowing about his projects. Men enough were needed, in his opinion, both for towing the boat in calm weather, and for restowing the fish if they found they had chosen the wrong side of the upper deck when they got out at sea, and for handling the fish in Bergen. And "new-fangled notions" should not, he said, looking at Morten, and striking a cask till it rang again, be introduced into the business so long as he managed it.

He stood in the warehouse—his own domain—when he made this reply; and so it rested, although the reform has since been introduced in Norland. But from that day Heggelund felt a greater respect for Morten, and resolved that he should receive a thorough business education, seeing in him a possible card to play against the human being he most hated upon earth—Thor Stuwitz.

The minister's son, who had passed a brilliant examination in Christiania, had already given Morten instruction on Sundays, but Heggelund now desired that he should have lessons twice a week; he could not, he said, send a perfectly ignorant peasant-boy straight into a large counting-house, and his wife was entirely of his opinion.

Edel was a peculiar girl, and it was hard for

Morten to understand her. He could not tell whether she liked or disliked him, but rather inclined to the latter belief. Her face was neither regular nor what one would call girlishly pretty; her features were too marked for that. Although more womanly, they reminded one of her mother, and her hair was, withal, quite brown. There was a contrast between her slight, overgrown figure, which made her look taller than she really was, and the remarkably heavy, dark hair which indicated a rich, vigorous nature.

She was her father's favorite, and had from childhood spent much time in his office, where she both played and sewed; and thus learning to divine his face, she gradually became his secret confidant in things which were not quite clear to her, and too burdensome for her child-nature;—he could not live without her. Thus growing up between the pressure of her mother's strong will and her father's, in secret, often disheartened moods, she acquired an unnatural reserve for a young girl, which often conveyed an impression of restraint which repulsed Morten. Her elder, fair sister Hansine, on the contrary, was good-natured and approachable.

When on a visit to her friend Julie Schultz, Edel, they said, could be very bright and lively; but at home he had little evidence of this, and what he saw, moreover, pleased him still less, for her wit was accidentally directed against himself.

With his good memory he had picked up many foreign words from the conversation of others, which were singularly pleasing to his ear, and he often used them in conversation. Edel had observed this, and more frequently talked with him, interlarding her speech with all the strange words she could hit upon. Morten took this for a time in good faith, but when he came to a realization of her intent he felt sorely hurt. From that day on he used no foreign words.

If during this period Morten felt himself repulsed in many ways, there were two points on which he was fast grounded—his personal attachment for Heggelund and his friendship for his nephew Andreas.

Heggelund's sister felt very content when her brother became interested in her son, who, after his unsuccessful attempt at the Latin school, had made a trial in a shop at Trondhjem. Heggelund paid his debts and took him along to Norland to give him a chance in his business there.

Andreas was a great comfort to the household; he hated Stuwitz, and received money from his uncle for it; could do miracles of work on a busy day down at the warehouse, but rested quietly on his laurels for a week after, during which he scarcely entered it. He rescued people when in deadly peril; was handy on board the sloop on its Bergen trips, and clever in many ways,—but he could never remember

the price-list, and had no further business efficiency. He used, later, to refer people to Morten, but there was an occasional despondency in his tone. He saw that the latter, in spite of his birth and his peasant garb, conquered with sure strides all that he, with his talent for learning, had spent many years in acquiring.

Morten, on the other hand, was especially attracted to Andreas by the constant proofs he gave of a good heart; if without money, as was usually the case, although he received frequent supplies from his uncle, he would take off the very clothes from his back to give a poor man. He had a certain easy assurance of manner which Morten could not sufficiently admire. Difficulties did not seem to exist for him, only he was so provokingly unfortunate on the occasions when he had something of unusual importance to accomplish; in ordinary daily affairs, which could be performed with a single effort, a brilliant inspiration, or an energetic bound, he never failed. He was ever finely dressed, was tall and slender, and his fine mustache became his handsome, somewhat delicate face so well. In youthful friendship such impressions have almost the same prominence as in love. His cleverness, evinced by the many plans in which he was so fertile, greatly dazzled Morten in the beginning. Later, when he was better able to determine their value, he could discern in them one of the great lacks which would

make Andreas less fit for practical life. But his friendship suffered no diminution; it increased rather in the same degree that he was obliged to bear with other frailties of his character.

Andreas Heggelund's courage for the future had hitherto been unlimited; he had only been checked by bad luck. Now, after two years' association with Morten, he had gradually come to a clearer perception of the qualifications necessary to business success, and his self-confidence in this respect had received a severe blow. He was in bad humor, and pondered over his fitness for something else rather than trade; he needed only to hit upon the right thing. Had he acknowledged that he really lacked the chief qualification for distinction in any work, he would probably have given himself over to despair at first, but perhaps have gained all the more for it later. Now he chose only to shift the focus to suit his inconstant nature, and thereby see the ever-brilliant horizon through a differently colored glass.

One day he confided to his uncle that he had no talent whatever for trade, but had long felt a desire to go to college and take a degree.

He had read much of what was required at school in Trondhjem, and would now only need to review it with the minister's son.

For the first weeks he was warmly in earnest, and made an advance which surprised even his teacher.

But gradually his efforts weakened; he neglected his recitations one by one, and at last almost entirely relinquished them. His family began to consider this undertaking lost in his old instability, when Morten came to his friend's assistance. He offered to sit up three evenings in the week, after shop hours, and read aloud to him. Andreas, who felt that this would be less fatiguing and insure regularity, accepted the offer. It would be so pleasant, he said, to sit and smoke while Morten read.

They made good progress for several weeks, but then Andreas began to drop behind. He invented many excuses: now it was too early to leave the others; now he would fill a couple of hours in his room in chatting about his prospects as a lawyer; now he declared straight out that he was not going to read that evening.

One evening, Morten, in all simplicity, used an expression which urged him on in his reading with the speed of a harpooned whale, for two or three months. He only said in a tone of hopeless discouragement, "All the others will again say that you can't do anything."

Morten saw that his pride was wounded, but not that Andreas had involuntarily read this judgment in his own eyes; he was more sensitive to Morten's opinion than he would have acknowledged, and felt secretly humiliated.

For two days he was in a very gloomy state of mind. Pale and sick, he lay upon his bed upstairs. At last he confessed to his anxious friend that he had written a love-letter to the Judge's daughter, Julie, who had frequently visited the house, her last visit being on Christmas; he had loved her ever since he first saw her, on her coming to his uncle's home. "And now," he said, tragically, raising himself in bed, "the matter is out. The attorney has a position,—I have none; and she answered as her father dictated." He did not know why he should read and work,—it was all the same to him now. His face was as black as night as he said this.

Morten felt exceedingly troubled about his friend, but at the last words he pricked up his ears. He must not be permitted to go on in this way, at all events. So he pressed him blindly with the old spurs:

"The Judge's daughter probably thought like the rest—that you would never amount to anything."

Indeed?" said Andreas, slowly, with deep mortification. After nursing his bitter thoughts for some time, he added:

"But she, at least, should have thought otherwise of me."

Morten was bravely silent, although the speaker evidently expected a word confirming his last remark.

Then Andreas sprang to his feet and said, resolutely:

“We will read this evening, Morten.”

Pale Julie Schultz came, as before, on a visit. At first there was a little embarrassment on both sides. Andreas was solemnly unhappy, of course,—a condition explicable alone to Julie, and she often a little flushed. But he soon came out of this annoying state, and there was the same joking and merriment as before.

She had evidently confided this affair to her younger friend, Edel, which Morten considered pure perfidy,—nor did it raise Edel in his estimation. After all, he thought, angrily, these fine ladies possessed but little real feeling. Andreas outweighed both of them,—they were not worthy of him.

One day Edel was to cross the sound, on a visit to their neighbors,—an old skipper and his wife, in good circumstances, whom she and her sister often went to see,—and as no one else was about, Morten offered to row her over. On their return, she proposed to fish, as there happened to be lines and bait in the boat. So she fished, and Morten kept the boat steady with the oars.

They sat quite silent. Edel had repeatedly felt a “bite,” and Morten had renewed her bait. All at once she began to pull eagerly—she had caught a codfish. When it came up, and Morten had taken

it off the hook, she took it from his hand, and asked, mirthfully, as she turned its head toward him:

“Who does it look like?”

Morten could not tell.

“Can’t you see, nor guess? He who has taken his degree,—the minister’s son. It has exactly his broad mouth and learned eyes, which look as if they had no eyelids.”

Morten was compelled to laugh, for there really was some resemblance. But it seemed as if Edel immediately wished her words unsaid. Shortly after she remarked, for the sake of saying something:

“You must have spent many days in this way out on the open sea.”

“Oh, yes; many times alone, but my father or some one else was usually with me; and at one time I used to go with my mother, but I was small then.”

There was something sympathetic in this, Morten’s reply, and she said:

“Yes, I suppose you had many troubles in your childhood.”

“Not we children, but father and mother have had much sorrow; they always managed to keep most of it from us, but later we suspected many things.”

He could not understand why these words should strike her so, but she at once fell to thinking, and looked very sorrowful, and almost stricken. At last she said, as if in connection with her thoughts:

“Your mother must be a noble woman!”

Although Edel's face, as we have said, was not the type which Morten thought most beautiful, he now saw that at certain moments she could be altogether charming. Her eyes, which were sparkling brown when she laughed over the fish, could become quite black under the dark eyelashes; and the way in which she sat, with the line in her hands, red with the salt water, was also singularly fascinating.

When he rowed her to the landing, she sat gazing reflectively almost straight at him, and he felt slightly hurt in the thought that to her he was only a rowing-machine, named Morten Jonsen.

The news that Norway had obtained her own trade-flag from King Oscar, instead of the old yellow one, ran like fire through dry grass all over the land. The steamer Prince Gustav brought the word, with booming guns, to the Norland and Finnish stopping-places on her route, creating a great sensation. Norland sloops should no longer ply to Bergen with the yellow flag, but float their own national colors from the stern; and the change was made on all the flagstaffs.

There was to be a celebration, in honor of the event, at Heggelund's house, and the speeches were to be made on the mound under the flagstaff, and salutes fired. After many consultations back and

forth between the great men of the district, the order of speeches, among other things, was determined, with a show of extreme modesty and reciprocal flattery, all parties still feeling that therein lay inflammable material enough for offense.

The celebration was to take place after midsummer, on the return of the sloops from Bergen; and, as the day approached, Andreas Heggelund was activity itself. When he learned from his aunt that his rival, the attorney, was to speak on the occasion, he was not in very good humor, and Morten understood that something unusual was the matter with him, for at evening he kept up a constant walking to and fro in his chamber.

He let slip that he was also preparing a speech, but was in despair because he did not know what it should be about. Now he thought of one subject, now of another; if he only knew what theme the attorney would choose!—"and it takes courage, too, Morten!"

The day dawned; rows of boats filled with guests crossed the sound. The sloops and boats out in the bay were decorated with flags, and Andreas and his assistants were keeping the cannon warm in the garden. He had been pale and restless all day. Morten was very grave, he had never seen such a festival.

The garden was crowded, and around the speaker's

stand stood young ladies in white, with ribbons the color of the flag. The national hymn was played on horns, and the Judge made the address for the King. Then came "Sons of Norway,"* and the speech of the day for the men who had fought for their Fatherland's rights.

The beautiful sentiments stirred Morten deeply; when the cannon thundered, it was as if he no longer felt the earth beneath his feet.

Then Heggelund gave the toast for "Norland's future under the new flag," and, though the speech was short, his words were received with endless cheers, and glasses were thrown high in air. It was the first time Morten had seen the land of poesy painted in words; he did not receive them lightly, but as literal truth. He must have a breathing spell, so he begged to assist Andreas at the cannons. From that moment they were handled with such precision and calmness that he might have been taken for a phlegmatic Dutchman.

The attorney rose and made a speech in honor of woman—woman as mother, (here he bowed complaisantly to Fru Heggelund,) as daughter, as bride, and thereby won special applause from the young ladies.

Andreas could not bear this, and before he himself knew it, he was, no less to Fru Heggelund's sur-

* Patriotic song.

prise than his own, up on the platform. Morten stood anxiously interested in his behalf. Andreas, in his heat, had begun by half objecting to the former speaker's treatment of his theme. He had worked himself into the same train of thought, and must now advance something which would considerably improve upon it. But Andreas was at home in just such a position. The happy idea came to him of not speaking about woman in general, but about the Norland woman in particular—the poor wife who works and waits for the return of her husband in his fishing-boat, as of the rich one expecting her husband in his sloop from market. He described a hospitable Norland housewife, sketching clearly enough his dignified aunt, and then a blue-eyed maiden, fair and pure as the snow,—that was Julie Schultz.

Happily enough he concluded at the right moment, and this home toast gained great applause.

Andreas stepped down, flushed with emotion; the ladies gathered eagerly about him. The attorney was entirely vanquished, and it was difficult for Julie Schultz to conceal the tears in her eyes.

The next to grasp his hand was Morten. He only said, "Thank!" and returned again to the cannon; it seemed to him that in his speech Andreas had also named his own mother out on Skorpen.

The feast was continued with much merriment

and joy, and then followed a couple of days' groundswell of sociability inside the house.

Heggelund and his wife were not a little proud that the best speech of the day had been made by their nephew,—the Judge himself had expressed his surprise at the young man's talent.

Andreas Heggelund's unwonted energy had gradually brought him the respect of both his uncle and annt; the latter laying great stress on a remark of student Sem, to the effect that he had a remarkably good head, and it was a pity that he had lost so many years in trifling. Now they thought his talent quite as marked for books as he was unfit for all else, and his stock rose one hundred per cent at home. He was sent in grand style by steamer to Christiania, as the half-adopted son of the house, although one of their sloops was to leave at the same time for Bergen.

With the help of a private tutor, Andreas took a degree. That he was now the genius of the family was a settled matter. Distance also did its share to increase his glory. Fru Heggelund saw him in imagination as a future judge in Norland, and Heggelund after a time began to view his nephew through the same spectacles.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEPARTURE.

MORTEN had experienced not a little during the years he had lived with Heggelund. Through his intercourse with Andreas and the society of the house, in which he had come to mingle gradually, as Heggelund wished it, he had, not alone in an external sense, imbibed much of the refinement which prevailed there. Many of his former ideas had undergone a change, and instead of the embarrassed uncertainty from which he first suffered every time he stepped into the parlor, his bearing had won a certain charm, which proceeded from the unassuming naturalness of his manners. He was still the same person whom Heggelund had helped on—he had not even changed his peasant garb; but still he felt a certain self-esteem which did not fail to make its impress.

He had a small regular salary, of which he always sent the half to his parents, from whom he heard whenever opportunity offered, as well as on sermon Sundays. He had been to Bergen often with the sloops, and seen much which confirmed the opinion he had brought from home concerning Stuwitz; he was now quite positive that he was defrauding Heggelund.

He sought at one time to give his master the necessary proofs of this. The strangely evasive though friendly manner in which Heggelund received him taught Morten to remain passive and silent in these matters for the future. Still it was, and continued to be, a riddle to him why his principal would not see this; he was boiling over with indignation.

Repeated unfavorable rumors concerning Morten's Bergen trips reached his home; they were whispered about until they finally came to Heggelund. It was rumored that during the market season he and his comrades lived not only a merry but a dissolute life, and that he also squandered his money.

The truth was, that Morten was a great favorite, and received many invitations out, and on such occasions was frequently one of the merriest. On one of his first trips he had also, as was generally known, gone on board with a black eye, and this black eye was now brought up as a proof against him.

Morten knew nothing of all this; but he noticed several times that Fru Heggelund received him coldly on his return. At last Jonfru Dyring took him aside and told him how matters stood. She was sure of his innocence, and had taken the trouble to defend him with Fru Heggelund; but now she learned that the reports originated with Stuwitz' favorite, the captain, against whom she wished to warn him.

When excesses, in the ordinary acceptation of the

term, were hinted at, Morten flushed; but when the squandering of money was mentioned, he turned away suddenly, with a look which frightened her, and went straight to Heggelund's office. His tone was modest, but there was something in his bearing which forbade refusal. He took out his little pocket-book, in which, business like, he had noted all his expenditures, and next, thanks to his faithful memory, enumerated the names of those who had invited him on his last two visits in Bergen. There was but one scamp in the house, he concluded in a louder tone, and that was Stuwitz,—he had for the moment forgotten the captain; and now that he had given his opinion, Heggelund could dismiss him if it so pleased him.

There was a certain dangerous clear-headedness in the speech of the pale young man which impressed Heggelund, who, astonished, had not sought to interrupt him all this time. When he had finished, Heggelund assured him, in a cordial and fatherly manner, that the unlimited trust he had always entertained for him was not in the least shaken; but, he concluded, it is time, I see, you were separated from Stuwitz, and you shall go to Bergen this fall. Certain lines in Morten's face indicated that his apparent calmness was somewhat shaken by this friendly response. He was evidently seeking a suitable reply amid his strong emotions; but Heggelund appeared not to notice it, and only repeated, as Morten bowed

himself out, that it was high time he should go to Bergen.

Fortunately, Stuwitz was not at home that day; for otherwise Morten would surely have insulted the latter, instead of going up to Heggelund.

This incident cleared the atmosphere of the house for him in many respects. Fru Heggelund's anger at all the impositions practiced upon the young man was not slight. The following days she asked in a kindly manner after his parents, and Jomfru Dyring was required to look over his outfit for the journey. The housekeeper's face shone like the sun after a storm has cleared away.

This affair made a deep impression upon Edel. She could not deny that she had been watching for faults in him. Andreas, who was so lovable, had plenty of them. But latterly these reports had come in such numbers from Bergen that she instinctively divined their exaggeration, and took his part. Under her quiet manner she concealed not a little of her mother's strong likes and dislikes for persons. The possibility of a deeper feeling for this peasant-boy, whom her father had taken into his house, lay naturally outside the very shadow of her thoughts. When she heard from her father how boldly Morten had risked his situation, she comprehended to the full the manliness of his action.

Before Morten's departure for Bergen, something

happened which awakened the thought that Heggelund must be suffering deep trouble.

On going through the hall, one forenoon, as he passed Heggelund's office he saw the door stood ajar, as if some one had entered and forgotten to close it. Heggelund sat inside, at his desk,—but so distressed a face Morten had not seen in his whole lifetime,—leaning against Edel, with a look of despair, while she stood stroking his brow and clasping his hand. Morten passed, as if unconscious, but Edel raised her eyes at the moment and caught his glance; a frightened look passed over her face at the surprise, and he heard the door close soon after. Morten felt that he had caught a glimpse of the true condition of the house; there was some hidden sorrow; and he now began to understand the expression which he had often seen on Edel's face,—the same which had once struck his notice in the boat.

The same day she was walking in the garden, still lost in thought, while her sister, Hansine, chatted by her side; and later, when he saw her handsome dark head bending over her sewing behind the window-pane, because of all that he had learned he felt keenly desolate, though in fact he knew nothing. He now discovered how unspeakably attached he was to the whole family, even to the mistress.

At the tea-table, not a look of Edel's betrayed that anything unusual had transpired. After she had

gone upstairs with Uncle Tobias, she came down to Morten in the outside entrance, and, laying her hand a moment upon his arm, looked him earnestly in the face and said, half under her breath, that she depended upon his never mentioning what he had seen that day. "Father was greatly disturbed about something."

"Never! Froken* Edel," he replied; but this "never" was spoken in such a way that Edel at once felt relieved.

Although several years younger, she looked at him for a moment in surprise, as though he were some incomprehensible, great child, who did not know what he was saying. She understood he had desired to lay his attached heart at the feet of the whole family, but now felt that she herself held it in her hand. She spoke a few words and returned to the parlor, but later thought to herself that she had been somewhat too bold.

From that time Edel was unusually attentive and kind to Morten. He did not suspect her real motive, but would have preferred it to have been as before, for he felt involuntarily that the distance between them was only increased thereby. He could not cease thinking of her, late and early, and was heavy-hearted instead of glad at his approaching departure.

It was the evening previous to his leaving, at an

* Miss.

early hour of the morning, for Bergen. He had taken his leave of the whole family, who had gone to their chambers at the usual hour. He was now alone in the parlor. It was quite late, and the last pale ray of the midnight sun fell without warmth upon the opposite wall. He was sitting over Edel's open workbox, and utterly absorbed, when he suddenly heard Jomfru Dyring's voice behind him. Her police instinct had caused her to pounce down as usual, when least expected, and she said, somewhat ironically, but kindly:

"So you're sitting there, taking leave, Jonsen!"

Being surprised in the act, he felt also the need of a confidant. His eyes fell, and he said only:

"Yes, Jomfru Dyring!"

"You must try to forget such fancies, Jonsen,—they will bring you no good."

"I cannot, Jomfru Dyring!"

The housekeeper felt a sincere concern for her favorite; she understood that this was more than jest. She must comfort him, and said:

"Yes, yes, Morten Jonsen, no one knows what the future may bring!"

"The future," repeated Morten slowly to himself,—and he thought of the beam in his parents' home, on which he had first learned to read those words,—
"that lies in God's hands," he added involuntarily,

using his mother's words, and wept whilst his friend stood there beside him.

Jomfru Dyring had no inclination for sleep that night, and remained up until the sloop glided out of the sound, two hours later, in the gray dawn. To her surprise she found Edel standing in the office window.

“Are you here, Froken Edel?”

“Yes, I could not sleep,” she replied; and then, after standing there a little time, they separated.

That same year it was reported that Heggelund had taken an unusually large loan, to secure which his property had been mortgaged. This awakened great surprise and discussion, and some individuals even ventured to question the solvency of his so notorious fortune.

CHAPTER XII.

IN BERGEN.

MUHLLENWAD, of Bergen, to whom Morten had gone, carried on a large trade in Norland, and had an extensive connection abroad on the continent, where he shipped his fish. Many Norlanders from Helgeland, and far north in Finmark, were written down as debtors in the ledgers of his office, on the Dutch quay.

During the two market seasons, many sloops, trading there, anchored as far inside the harbor as possible, just outside his place. There was the greatest activity at such times on the quay, when the fish were weighed and sent off, while all day long crowds of Norlanders passed in and out of the rooms, delivering their merchandise; paying a little on their old accounts, and receiving the balance in cash, was the customary method of transacting business.

Old Muhlenwad himself lived in High street, in a white, gable-roofed house of the old Dutch style, which stood inclosed by its neighbors in the row, like a soldier in the ranks. He was in every way a man of the old school, and belonged to the German families who attended the Dutch church. He was

strictly religious, observing all the forms; a moneyed and business man from top to toe, and conceived the Lord to be essentially the most prompt and prominent business man of the universe. The God with whom he kept an account was also just as parsimonious and narrow as himself, and was especially jealous of his dues, allowing no omission of the grace at table, and morning and evening prayer, or the morning sermon and reading of the scriptures at home on the seventh day.

With his broad-brimmed hat, brown coat and heavy, brown gold-headed cane, with its kid cap, always to be seen at his post, he was one of the queer characters of the old Bourse. That his name was as good as gold everybody knew, and also that he was against all the improvements which began to appear in the younger business community, and not least in the matter of a new exchange, which they were beginning to agitate. His wife, who died early, and who had not had too comfortable a time in this life, but whose grave was marked by a great monument in the churchyard, had borne him a son, by name Wollert, whose only freedom in youth had been in school-days, whose fear was still his father, and who, after a short stay in Hamburg, had now returned a complete fop,—in which personification he always avoided his father's attention by the most ingenious devices; but he had now and then

been accidentally surprised therein; a doleful court-martial had taken place, in which his father's brown stick played its part, and he would then sit a prisoner in the office or the parlor closet at home.

In this joyless house the boy lived, watched by his two old maiden aunts,—Muhlenwad's sisters,—who always joined the council of war held to judge his conduct, and his only freedom was in summer, when the family lived at their little country-place in Kongshavn and he was at the office in town.

Although it was the busy season, and there was enough to do at the office, he always felt more relieved and free from the home espionage. His aunts each took in turn their week in town, in order to superintend the meals for the Norland people, the same aunt presiding on Sundays, when a company was made for these persons, always seated beside Muhlenwad, in a high yellow-leather chair, while red wine, not of the very best quality, was served with the barley broth and steak. He always managed to get a little breathing spell at such times.

Although obliged to accompany his father and aunts to the German church, and to remain inside the house nearly all the Sunday, still he knew that in the evening, when the old people had gone to bed, he could take his turn with his comrades. One winter night one of the aunts, on her rounds with a light, found his room empty, and a ladder standing

under the window. When he returned, later in the evening, and lighted his candle, there sat a council of war in night-caps. His fright was great, but his quick sight soon made him aware that the "old man" was not present, and he took his measures accordingly. He said aloud, as he strode to the window as if to cast himself out:

"Now you look on while I cut short my life!"

The result was that his frightened aunts, from that day forth, outside the old man's knowledge, helped him to a "proper amount of liberty," and gave him pocket-money, as well, to enjoy it.

Young Wollert, meantime, had had money in his pockets before his aunts assisted him. He borrowed from his uncle Daniel, who was a miser and lived alone in a house in the garden below. The latter's parsimony was the occasion of many a familiar story in the town, and it was known that he scarcely allowed himself dry bread. He considered that he had been defrauded in his inheritance by his brother, the merchant, and he hated him deeply. When his nephew told him how he fared at home he always sympathized with him, and once, when he complained that he never had any money, he offered to give him loans until he should come of age and could dispose of his mother's legacy. Wollert gave his uncle a receipt each time, with twenty-four per cent interest, thus having a bank of his own. He was obliged,

also, to bind himself to watch and discover who stole the currants from the garden or cast stones at the windows. The small boys were hard upon the usurer. When the latter, with a loaf of bread tucked under his blue overcoat, which fell to his feet, and his cotton umbrella in hand, walked up the street, toward evening, to his garden gate, they often followed him on all sides, calling him nicknames.

In the beginning, Morten had a hard enough time of it at Muhlenwad's, and discovered in many ways that Stuwitz's arm reached even there; for among his large Norland dealings Muhlenwad had all Heggelund's trade as well, and entertained the greatest respect for Stuwitz, whom, in a series of years, he had learned to regard as the real manager of the business, and, in consequence of a hint from him, received Morten Jonsen with a prejudice, as a mere favorite of Heggelund's, and a sort of visionary as well. He must have a regard for the wish of so extensive a patron, but "the fellow himself naturally was not worth a pipe of tobacco"; and when Muhlenwad had once fixed upon an idea it took considerable to shake it.

Morten filled a sort of subordinate middle place, for which he had little taste, part of the time helping the lad at the landing, and part of the time working in the office. Most of his time was spent down at the jib, on the landing, in daily drudgery; but he gradually won Muhlenwad's reluctant acknowl-

edgment by the promptness and order which entered into everything he was responsible for.

At market time, when the fish were to be assorted, he displayed such judgment in the matter as to surprise his employer; it was the fruit of his thorough experience in these things.

Muhlenwad, readily perceiving the benefit he might derive from this, offered him the management of the quay, and the position of head man. Morten thanked him for his offer, but, to Muhlenwad's regret, replied, No, he wished to go through the counting-house, and, as this was not according to his master's desire, Morten was again in disfavor.

During the latter part of his stay at Heggelund's, he had learned the rudiments of the German language from the minister's son, and with the assistance of a German clerk, whom he knew and associated with, had worked at it in all his leisure hours, and especially on Sundays, ever since he came to Bergen. After a year and a half he had advanced sufficiently to both read and write the language. Morten desired to get on in the world.

Wollert Muhlenwad, who was, in fact, a good-hearted, companionable fellow, would hardly have led his present dandy life, or worn his tight trousers, and sported gold eye-glasses, which he removed whenever he really wanted to see anything, if the pressure and confinement of his home had not made him look

upon unbounded freedom in too dazzling a light. He often talked with Morten, and seemed to enjoy his company exceedingly; it was, perhaps, the good fortune of the latter that the young gentleman did not consider him polished and refined enough to introduce among his friends. On Sundays he would often sit for hours in Morten's little room, down on the landing, spinning yarns.

He observed once that Morten sat writing a German letter, and heard, to his astonishment, that he knew the language, and something of bookkeeping as well, having learned the latter by himself.

This young gentleman, Wollert, hated the office, and everything appertaining to it, as strongly as Morten liked it. It was not long before he proposed to the latter to write his German correspondence, which he would only have to copy afterward and deliver to the "old man." Morten felt that this was not quite right, but eased his conscience by refusing to receive the offered compensation for his work, which would fill up all his time on Sundays.

In this way, Wollert led a free and easy life, and gained the decided commendation of his father, who told his aunts that his letters read as if written by an old, experienced merchant, and were likewise so short, concise and clear;—"Wollert might amount to something after all!" He received a gold watch on his

birthday, and ventured to wear his gold glasses openly, but used them less frequently.

Then came an unhappy discovery one day, when Wollert delivered a whole package of correspondence to his father. Among them lay two letters, written in a fine, ready hand, which Wollert, in his haste, had forgotten to take out.

When the "old man" came upon the first of these,—a long, well expressed letter,—Wollert, who sat on the other side of the desk, waiting to superscribe and mail them, saw something was out of the way.

The "old man" sat for a long time silently gazing upon the letter; took it up and laid it down again with a look on his small, sharp face as if he had a false bill before him. One moment he glanced wildly at the corner where his heavy cane stood, with the old kid cap over its gold head, and Wollert shuddered; but then he commenced reading the letter over again, and in different places nodded slowly with bitter appreciation, as if giving due acknowledgment of how well and cleverly it was written. At last he exclaimed:

"No!—I might have known you couldn't write like this! Come here with your cursed eye-glasses, Wollert!"

Wollert meekly handed them over the desk, and the "old man" twisted them and crushed the glass under his foot.

“Who has written for you?”

Wollert evaded the question by saying that it was only those two letters; but a glance from the “old man” toward his cane made him suddenly truthful, and he replied:

“Jonsen.”

“Jonsen!—Jonsen here?—Indeed!”

It was a long “indeed,” which signified a great deal, and was finally followed by an inquiry:

“What has he taken for it?”

“He wouldn’t take anything.”

“Then I’ll tell you what he wants,” broke out the “old man” angrily, as if he again thought of the cane,—“he wants what you don’t, although you are the son of a thorough business man; he wants to learn something, I tell you, and you will never amount to his little finger!”

Thereupon he opened the door and told one of the clerks sitting there to call Jonsen up.

Muhlenwad sat reflecting for a time, and Wollert thought it dreadfully stifling in the little office. The trouble was that the “old man” was reluctant to say openly that he knew his son had deceived him.

When Morten came, he only asked, showing him the two letters:

“You wrote these?”

“Yes.”

“How did you learn to do this?”

When the young man had briefly explained, Muhlenwad said, in a tone that sounded as if he were reading from a book,—he had taken advantage of the time to repress his feelings:

“From to-morrow, henceforth, you will have a full clerkship and salary in my office, and the contents of my son’s letters must be first shown to you for approbation before they are placed on my desk.”

With this he nodded, and Morten left; but old Muhlenwad sat gazing at the door after him. At last he said, almost mildly:

“Yes, if you could only make such a fellow, Wollert!—he has metal that will amount to something; but your poor father has no prospect of such a result,” he sighed; and Wollert left, glad to be free at that price.

The next year Morten corresponded in French, also, and was more and more trusted in Muhlenwad’s office. It was known that all orders must pass through his hands, else Muhlenwad was never at rest about the correspondence. His salary was raised, and he could now live like other young men in his position. Educated in Muhlenwad’s school, money began to have a value in his eyes which was not natural to him. He only heard men valued according to their fortunes, and all his comrades dreamt of sometime becoming a matadore on exchange. Muhlenwad’s old

broad-brimmed hat was venerated by their young eyes almost as a crown.

Thus Morten Jonsen was in a fair way of becoming "a business man from top to toe." He affected this with a certain dash of assurance, and for his age had too self-sufficient a manner to be pleasing, though in certain ways it made him respected. His manly, open face, and a certain hearty way, hidden under the business shell, commanded unusual confidence.

In the houses which he had gradually found opportunity to enter he had met with many young ladies, but it seemed as if his senses were not open to that side of life.

He came to be looked upon as a young man too devoted to business to have an eye or ear for anything else. Little did they suspect that in his lonely hours he could summon an image before him, in comparison to which all others looked lifeless in his eyes; at times, indeed, he himself felt afraid of being utterly absorbed by it.

Edel Heggelund had spent a year down in Trondhjem, and as the daughter of the rich Heggelund, and also, perhaps, on her own account, had been much *fêted*. Morten had, with much difficulty, learned all about this, and felt a great relief when he heard that she had returned to Norland.

Her return home was occasioned by the sad event of her mother's unexpected death.

According to his promise, Morten had occasionally written to Heggelund, and always received, in response, a short, pleasant reply. On one occasion the answer was written for her father by Edel, who very kindly told him all about themselves, Uncle Tobias, Andreas (down in Christiania), and Jomfru Dyring; and at last came news from his parents out at Skorpen. He perceived that she could not have obtained this without much effort, as they lived so far away; and this oft-perused letter became his treasure.

Morten Jonsen now had a special reason to feel himself of importance at Muhlenwad's, for the latter had made several thousands, that winter, by a speculation which he had pointed out.

One day Muhlenwad was looking very serious in his office. He had received the intelligence that Heggelund, of Norland, was as good as ruined. The trading-post had passed into Stuwitz's hands, with whom the office would, in future, alone have to deal. His interests were fortunately assured by Stuwitz's precaution. "I have always suspected it," he added, "from the life which that man led. Now he barely owns the house he lives in, with its contents, and a small property further up in the fjord. The rest was disposed of at a forced sale by the creditors. It is hard to go through such trouble."

Morten Jonsen, deathly pale, stood listening, and

could not, during the remaining business hours, collect his thoughts for work. One might as well have told him that a mountain had been overthrown as Heggelund's house, where he had lived so many years with the impression that its foundations were built on riches, and he felt a most bitter sorrow. It had been a home to him, and he shared profoundly the mortification and grief which had befallen it. He felt more and more positive that Stuwitz was the cause and originator; it was clear as day that through all these years he had been enriching himself, ruining his master, and now, at last, had crowned his infamous work. Had he met Stuwitz at the time, he would undoubtedly have attacked him, blind to every other consideration but revenge.

He was not the same when in the office; he dispatched his work in quick time, and often left before it closed. In the evening, he took long, lonely walks on the road toward Sandvig, and sat up very late.

After the first sorrow, a thought dawned upon him which so stirred his blood that it was not easy for him to sleep. This was the possibility of winning Edel Heggelund under these altered circumstances.

There was no slight difference in his train of thought previously and at present. When he left Heggelund's, he felt that birth and education raised a dividing wall between them,—now it was, rather, a lack of fortune which parted them.

And since the pecuniary ruin of her father's house, his soul discovered a gleam of possibility on this point. At first this was but a dream, which constantly filled his thoughts, and always concluded with his return, after some great business speculations, as a rich man, his wooing Edel Heggelund, and raising the fallen house. Gradually, however, the realities of the situation began to intrude themselves in these dreams, and, although the conclusion was always the same, in that he always identified Edel Heggelund with the house, it was not so with the plans which were to take him there. On his lonely wanderings over the Sandvig road, a cape, with a small, fine bay, in the neighborhood of his home, began, little after little, to present itself to his inner sight; he was established there; traveled about far and near on business; saw crowds of people, and an ever-increasing traffic, and at last brought Edel Heggelund a bride to the beautiful house which he had built. Each evening a new touch was added to the picture.

Stuwitz's former notion of establishing a trading-post on Finn Point, down at Finn corner, had recurred to Morten. And gradually, as he pictured it to himself, and pondered over it, it ever appeared more practicable and tempting. He felt there would be difficulties, but, with a somewhat youthful arrogance perhaps, he also realized his own talents,—back of his enterprise he caught a glimpse of Edel.

Muhlenwad's astonishment was great when Morten, one day, resigned his clerkship, and, without going into details, declared his intention of establishing a small business for himself in the far north. He thought his confidential clerk must have lost his wits, to speak mildly, and offered many arguments to dissuade him from his purpose.

When he found this was of no avail, he granted him a prudent credit for a beginning. Morten himself had a capital of several hundred dollars.

No less surprised was Heggelund, to whom he felt he ought to write of the step he was about to take, as the former had always taken an active interest in his behalf. The tone of his letter was not unqualifiedly happy. He only gave, as his principal reason, that he longed to return to Norland, and expressed a somewhat self-confident trust that he should do a good business there. But the conclusion of the letter was even more inappropriate. After expressing his heartfelt gratitude, he concluded, somewhat clumsily, by expressing the hope that he might sometime be fortunate enough to attain a position which would enable him to return the kindness he had received at Heggelund's hands.

This vibrated, though in different ways, sensitive cords in both father and daughter.

Heggelund gave vent to this hidden sensitiveness in the fretful remark that he had not the slightest

conception how a beginner, without capital, could come up there and, as a matter of course, establish himself on the first and best point for business.

Edel had had her quiet dreams in reference to Morten Jonsen. As will be remembered, she had already discovered his love for her while he was living with them; but she was first awakened to a consciousness of her own feelings by his departure—on the night she met Jomfru Dyring in the upper hall. Since then this sentiment had grown clearer and clearer, and she had, so to say, lived her real life in it.

Her instinct led her to suspect now that she herself played a part in his sudden and remarkable decision, and she had for a moment flushed with joy at the thought. In her inmost soul she had long felt conscious that, if circumstances had permitted, she could have stretched out her hand to him over every consideration that caused their lives to differ in outward conditions; for she understood that this was the sole reason why he had refrained from ever attempting an effort to win her. But she had also put to his account a lack of faith in her, personally, which she believed had raised the barrier between them.

Now, from what had transpired in her home, their relation was evidently so changed as to inspire in him a hope, on which he had taken a decided resolution.

But that which had changed all this was the fact that Edel had now become a poor girl.

While in the office, during her childhood, Edel had felt an early consciousness of her father's being burdened by a sorrow which he endeavored to conceal, and, although the precise character of this trouble was never clear to her, she gradually came to know that Stuwitz was the cause of his suffering.

With the accounts, which he would sign without comment for Stuwitz, would come his gloomy moods, and then she would stand beside his desk, or sit upon his knee. This seemed to relieve him, and she understood that she was to say nothing of this to her mother.

It was such a scene—but at that time one of such overwhelming sorrow as to frighten her—which Morten Jonsen had inadvertently witnessed shortly before he left for Bergen.

The cause of it was the above-mentioned loan, which he was forced to take up, and which awakened so much gossip.

Pride was at that time a family weakness of the Heggelunds. When the auction was taking place in the house, and their property and business was knocked down to Stuwitz, she had looked down from her window upon the people crowding the place below, and felt that their house, in that very hour, *sank*.

The letter awakened bitterness in her soul, and she

felt herself personally underrated in a matter wherein a proud woman may be most deeply wounded,—by a lack of confidence in the full nobility of her love.

So long as she was herself the superior, she could, in a way, bear it; it was not so manifest then, and her manner at that time might, perhaps, have caused it; but now that she was poor— not for all the world!

CHAPTER XIII.

RETURN HOME.

ON his return north, Morten Jousen had many matters to look after in the vicinity of his home. Various preparations and purchases of goods were to be made, and he was obliged, before going home, to make several digressive trips.

He had no errand at Heggelund's, for he did not wish to trade with Stuwitz. But when he had come in the vicinity, the desire of again seeing Edel irresistibly seized upon him. The reasons for not going there, which had hitherto been so evident to him,—and the weightiest of which was, that he would not willingly return as one who had made no further advance in the world than when he left their house,—gave way more and more to the tempting thought of again being in her presence. As he struggled with himself, another gradually presented itself which determined him. He felt an oppression and fear at meeting her; for how would she look at him, and what would her welcome be? Perhaps her look would tell him that he had cherished only a senseless dream. In short, he felt at last that he must go there for the sake of the hope he lived in. In his

present despondent mood, he felt that he was but going there to see the bursting of the whole bubble.

He loitered all the day under many pretenses, and did not arrive until late in the evening, after bed-time.

Jomfru Dyring was going her accustomed night rounds. She was near dropping the candle from her hand when she unexpectedly met Morten in the hall, hanging up his traveling-coat.

By the light of a single candle in the parlor, of which he had so many lively reminiscences, she gave him a forlorn description of the situation.

Stuwitz, in his little red house down on the strand, was now master of the place; he had had a mortgage on the trading-post itself, even. He was the same old man, and lived in his miserly way as before, with his dog and clerk lying in the front room at night, for he always believed he was in danger of house-breakers; but since the death of the mistress he had taken on a much grander air. Without consulting Heggelund, he had recently taken one of his out-houses, which he insisted belonged to him, for his goods.

“Yes, things are in a bad way,” she concluded, giving vent to an outburst of sorrow,—“and dear Edel, she is now a poor girl. It was fortunate that her sister married well, for she would not have had the strength to bear all this.”

She sat there neat as ever in her freshly-fluted nightcap; but she sorely needed to relieve her anguished heart, and meanwhile she involuntarily stroked both fluting and curls.

“Can you remember, Jomfru Dyring,” said Morten, in a peculiarly serious tone, “the last evening we sat together in this room, when you pointed me to the future?”

Jomfru Dyring’s face did not look as if she gathered much hope from the word.

“Now I will confide something to you, Jomfru Dyring,” he continued after a short pause,—“all that I strive and have striven for is only with the intention of sometime winning Edel.”

Jomfru Dyring looked with surprise upon the young man. Her tardy thoughts needed time to collect themselves, and she regarded him meanwhile with changeful looks. His was a manly form, which could well inspire confidence. Her face pronounced this decision, while, speaking as if to herself, she said, “We must trust to the future.”

His old confidant gave her good opinion extreme prominence, for her, when she conducted him to the guest-chamber, which Morten, after many refusals, at last accepted, because he saw it would give her pleasure.

Morten was up early the following morning, and down in the sitting-room below, carefully dressed,

before any of the family entered. He was pale, and a cold perspiration stood on his brow, while Jomfru Dyring, with now and then a word, bustled in and out in her preparations for breakfast. She had purposely not disclosed his arrival, and wished it to be a surprise.

The door opened, and Edel stepped lightly into the room. She had not seen him at first, as he bowed, and cried, suddenly arrested in her surprise:

“Morten!—Welcome back, Hr. Jonsen!” She corrected herself an instant after, but a sudden gleam of joy shot from her eyes which she could not help any more than the flush which still suffused her face. Some words were exchanged amid mutual embarrassment, which neither of them could recall later, and the conversation continued quite formal until Heggelund appeared with a few questions about his journey and on general topics.

But Jomfru Dyring noticed that neither of them ate during breakfast,—she had her own prognostications and ideas on the subject.

He felt his reception a friendly one, although little by little the memory of his letter caused a more reserved tone in both Edel and her father. He also thought it rather singular that neither of them asked a word about his plans, while Heggelund, in a friendly way, took it for granted that he would stop some time with them.

Heggelund had grown noticeably old and bent under the adversity which had befallen him, and Edel seemed wholly devoted to the care of him. He was sickly on some days, and did not leave his office, which was also his sleeping-room. Then Edel was with him nearly the whole day, reading or keeping him company, and seeking to dissipate his dark, despondent mood.

In this lonely life Edel often had the oppressed feeling of an encaged bird,—a longing for the world often strongly possessed her; but she always sought then to comfort herself by the thought of the duty she had to perform at home. After Morten Jonsen had written that he was to return to Norland, these thoughts no longer haunted her; her home life had suddenly acquired a completeness and interest for her.

Morten felt a sad, vivid sense of the changes which had taken place. The same busy activity prevailed as before, for down at the shop and the landing everything went on in the old grooves; he saw Stuwitz and the rest passing in and out of the warehouse, and the harbor was all activity. But up at the great house everything seemed extinct, and only two servant girls, and now and then a beggar, were to be seen out in the courtyard. Marked retrenchments had been made in the household service, and the shop-people were now provided for by Stuwitz.

At noon, Heggelund, Edel, old Uncle Tobias, Jom-

fru Dyring and himself sat around a very small table—a great change from former days. Uncle Tobias was apparently revived by Morten's arrival, but he assiduously avoided all allusion to the home affairs. He was put in good humor, and chuckled inwardly in his peculiar manner when Morten, after dinner, when they were alone, came over to his rocking-chair and playfully lighted his pipe, in the same manner as on his first evening at the house.

Uncle Tobias well remembered it, and afterward requested to know about his interests, and what affairs he was about to undertake, which Morten told him briefly.

“Smart boy!—smart boy!” said Uncle Tobias, as he gave his pipe to be lighted again.

He sat reflecting for a time, and then exclaimed, somewhat unexpectedly:

“Hm. Edel is a handsome girl, Morten Jonsen!”

Morten could not deny this, but avoided a talk on the subject.

During the afternoon, Jomfru Dyring told him about Fru Heggelund's death, two years before.

“Yes,” she said, sighing deeply, “she heard that which caused her death.”

“It was about New-Year, and the mistress was stronger than she had been for a long time. One day she stood in the green-room, outside the office, sorting the linen in the clothes-press,—they were expecting

guests the following day. Stuwitz and her husband were looking over the accounts inside, as they always did at that time of the year. I could hear underneath that they were talking in loud tones—Heggelund especially,—but Stuwitz replied curtly and gruffly. Then, poor thing, she heard how affairs stood, for it was at that time that the trading-post was mortgaged. After Stuwitz left, she was in with Heggelund for a long time, and the wretched man remained the whole day in his locked office. The mistress was very pale when she called me to her at noon. She had been sitting alone on the sofa in the cabinet. I had several times looked in, as I had many things to ask her about, but did not dare to disturb her. When I then came, she began to give me explicit directions about the bed and table linen, and all the finer things, which she always cared for personally, as well as the necessary orders about one of her poor sick people, whom she always nursed herself, as you know.”

Jomfru Dyring's emotion forced her to stop for a moment, and her tears flowed as she continued:

“Then she gave me the big chased ring of keys which she always wore in her belt. ‘You must take them, Jomfru Dyring,’ she said, ‘for I am sick and must go to bed, and God knows if I shall ever leave it again.’ I made no objection, for her manner was so solemn. She looked as calm and proud

as ever, but there was something in her eyes and face as she gave me her orders which made my heart heavy the whole night. She looked around the room for an instant before going upstairs to bed. Then she lay four days without speaking a word. The last morning she pointed out the key to the cupboard containing the sheets she wished to be laid out in, and gave me her gold watch, which lay on her night-table. She mentioned Edel and Hansine several times. When the household folk were to come in to receive her farewell, she whispered, and indicated as she was wont, with a commanding gesture of the hand, that she would not see Stuwitz.

“With her white hair against the pillow, she lay in her bed like a queen in state, while the servants and the old, poor people softly passed through the room. Dean Muller was with her, and then Heggelund was permitted to take her hand,—she had heard him weeping behind the curtains of her bed. I held her as she drew her last breath, and,” concluded Jomfru Dyring, in her emotion, “she was worthy to be queen, so great an honor was it to have her for a mistress, and she was as true as gold to those in whom she had once placed confidence.”

Morten took this to heart. He thought of all the sorrow which had visited this once happy home, and of Edel, who had borne all this on her young shoulders.

Edel had undeniably improved in appearance during these years, and that not only in Morten Jonsen's partial eyes. The heavy, rich hair, and dark eyes, lent her perhaps rather dark complexion a peculiar beauty, and the pose of her head gave her bearing a special charm. Adversity, and an inner and not unruffled life, had impressed upon her face a soulful and mature expression of mental growth and character unusual in so young a girl. There was in it, perhaps inherited from her mother, a little too much self-will.

Morten Jonsen appeared anything else than the confident, composed wooer her angry fancy had depicted, and whom she would have met with all her offended pride. The fact that he now sought her neighborhood contradicted all the charges she had made against him on that score, and her secretly impetuous nature felt a repentant need of almost asking his pardon for the wrong she had done him in her heart.

The slight reserve which she had assumed after her first encounter gave way on the following days to more straightforward, natural relations. She was one of those natures who have a wall about them, and are therefore necessarily a little reserved. But, nevertheless, there were certain obstructions in their path.

Unaccustomed as she was to the world's opinion,

the young girl was pained and hurt by what she felt he might be secretly thinking about their changed home. A natural bearing in her, or a happy word on his part, would have dissipated this; but Morten was not sufficiently bold for that.

Therefore, those things which touched both more nearly never came to be mentioned. Morten had the feeling that she deliberately avoided all mention of his future plans, and would not himself broach the matter; still it was not long before these two young people, who daily carried on a rather forced conversation, felt pretty sure of each other's feelings.

They always came down into the parlor a good while before the others, at breakfast, and they often chanced to meet in the sitting-room when no others were present. As a matter of course, this was purely accidental on both sides, and she was always very much absorbed in her occupation; but this being alone together had a peculiar intoxication for them.

One afternoon she had gone to see Elias Rost, who was sick, and Morten had promised to call for her. They walked in the lovely moonlight, which silvered mountain and bay, but neither of them had spoken a word the whole distance. When they parted in the hall, he said, suddenly:

“I shall soon go out to try my fortune, Miss Edel!”

Morten had spent a week with them, on Heggel-

und's invitation, and must now leave, on account of his business.

Every evening he had lain awake far into the night, rehearsing all that had transpired during the day; but the last two nights he had been wakeful for another reason. He felt mightily tempted to speak out at once his love for her, and had, at one time, as good as determined upon it; but then the thoughts which had for the past few days been quieted so remarkably again presented themselves—his old pride, felt in the presence of the family to whom he had come as a peasant-boy. He saw, in an ever-stronger light, the humility of such a step, so long as he had not first won his right to it, in the eyes of the world, by an acquired position in life. What would her father think? And Edel, what would she herself think of such an empty-handed suitor, who only offered her a few dubious prospects which no one could have faith in.

At last it was clear, and he decided that if any one on earth were to stand in such a position, at any rate his name should not be Morten Jonsen.

In the morning he told them, more decidedly than Edel had expected, that he intended to leave before noon.

During the forenoon they were alone in the parlor. Morten spoke, for the first time, about his plans. There was a peculiar tone in his voice which made

Edel tremble as she sat and sewed. She had replied in monosyllables. To one of his remarks she happened, for the sake of saying something, to ask :

“But why did you leave Bergen?”

“Because, Miss Edel,” he said, as if he would at last give his heart vent, “I could not bear to live so far away from—from—”

The young girl bent her flushed face low down over her work. She awaited the very word he had on his lips,—the little word “you,”—and bowed involuntarily, as does every woman, the moment she perceives the decisive shot from Cupid’s bow.

Though so near it, Morten Jonsen did not utter that word. He held fast to his previous resolution, and concluded the sentence faintly :

“From Norland.”

There was an oppressive silence, and then a few indifferent words, on her part, but her face changed expression. She had confidently expected his declaration, felt that it was coming, and that he had evaded it.

As Morten sat in the boat, rowing out of the bay, he felt a presentiment of good fortune. He had the assurance of being loved, and the plans which he now longed to put into execution, as soon as possible, had gained a new rose light.

But he wondered a little that Edel had not noticed his last greeting from the quay, which had been directed especially to her.

That evening the young maiden shed bitter tears in private. She was pained and mortified that she had been led into going further to meet him than her pride could now bear. For she perceived that it was as she first thought—he would not come until he could stand before her commanding a position worthy the consideration of her father and herself. If empty-handed, his plans in reference to herself would change, and she was valued no higher than to let the matter depend upon whether he made a lucky speculation or not.

“Well, Morten Jonsen,” she said to herself, angrily, “become rich, very rich, and you shall receive your answer!”

Jomfru Dyring unconsciously made the sting more piercing. She had felt that all was not as she desired it to be, and one day exclaimed, as by chance, to help her favorite:

“Look you, miss, he is a man to be depended upon, —he’ll make a future for himself!”

How Edel hated the word “future,” used in this sense!

Morten’s reason for hurrying his departure was, that he still hoped to be able to meet the Nütto family during their accustomed summer sojourn out on Skorpen.

When, after a seven years’ absence, he landed at

the steps beneath his parents' house, on the mountain slope, he had a strange, startled feeling that it was much smaller than he had remembered it. The broad, sun-burnished surface of the sea, the great mountain behind on the mainland, which now stood a bluish crimson in the evening sun, and all the surroundings, possessed a mighty beauty, which he again looked upon with emotion,—it was the picture of his childhood; only, in his fancy, the home cabin had filled a larger space.

He had kept his boat close to the shore, that he might surprise them with his arrival, and wondered if a flock of sheep, which he had seen on a mountain-knoll, belonged to them at home.

Now he saw his mother sitting, as was her wont on summer evenings, out on the door-step, with her knitting-needles and ball of yarn in her lap. In a few springs he took the steep steps and stood suddenly before her on the threshold. It was an instant before she believed her own eyes and embraced her son, and still longer before she was herself again, from the strong, sudden joy.

His father was out on a fishing expedition, and would not be home for a week,—but he saw a pretty seventeen-year-old, fair-haired girl, who greeted him with wondering queries in her eyes, and was at first somewhat shy. It was his little sister Christine, who had grown up, and was the living image of her

mother when she was young, only not quite so tall, —and he learned that Eilert, his brother, was doing well with a merchant in the north.

During the evening, his mother several times looked critically at him; but he appeared so happy and content that she was satisfied.

As they sat alone together on the stone door-step, far into the evening, he told her that he had given up his place in Bergen—which caused her to clasp her hands,—and enlarged upon his plans for establishing a trading-post down at Finn Corner. He intended to begin the matter, the sooner the better, while the Finns were still on the island, and, later, to accompany them across to Karasuando, in Sweden, in order to make his contemplated connections.

So soon as a boat, with all sorts of current wares — coffee, sugars, tobacco, etc.,—which he expected to follow him, should arrive, he intended to begin in a way that would not startle them. In the beginning he would use an upturned boat, on land, for a shop. But the most important point was to induce the Kven and Nutto families to give consent, and relinquish their claim to the ground on Finn Point.

Marina listened to her son in silence,—she could not criticise his plans; but one point puzzled her, namely, his reason for all this, when he had so good a position in Bergen.

He knew his mother's thoughts by her face, and

in the quiet, dusky evening he confided to her breast all his love for Edel Heggelund.

She at once understood all, and entered with all her heart into her son's enterprise,—only she hinted, smilingly, that he might have put his journey to better and more satisfactory account when at Heggelund's lately. When her son enlarged upon his reasons, she made no reply; as his mother, she shared his pride, but felt readily enough that, in Edel's place, she would be of another opinion.

She needed the whole night to get this passably clear in her brain, and scarcely slept. She perceived that her assistance might be of great importance in the beginning, in winning a way for her son with the Finns. Already, on the following afternoon, she sat chatting familiarly of past and present down in Mathis Nutto's tent, over a cup of coffee made of beans which "her son had brought home with him."

It so happened that they spoke of the days when the Kven's daughter, Lyma, and Morten had been such good friends, and the Kven and Mathis again brought to mind how Marina had rescued Lyma and her mother, the Kven's first wife, and Nutto's daughter, from the skerry.

Another day, during a similar visit, she mentioned, accidentally as it were, that her son had a boat-load of wares with which he intended to trade; but she hinted that it was not so easy for a beginner any-

where in those parts, so long as Stuwitz was hanging over them all like a hawk.

She hit a truth here which she knew went home to them, on account of their old enmity to the latter, and also because it was a fact, for Stuwitz was known to be always on the watch against all competitors, and to avail himself of every measure to ruin them. She had that day a package of presents which Mathis was to take to Sweden to Lyma from Morten, and for his trouble he received a half-plug of tobacco. Marina readily won these people, and in this she showed herself both delicate and clever.

When Jon Zachariasen came home, he found, to his almost dismayed astonishment, that his son had returned, and was about opening a trade from his improvised shop under the upturned boat down on the ground near the Kven's tents. A number of Finns had already put in an appearance to barter and trade, and on the strand lay a couple of boat-crews whom the report had brought thither from the mainland.

Jon did not express to his son, at any length, his opinion of the step he had taken, or as to what he had before him in carrying out his undertaking. But to Marina he did not conceal his displeasure, and said that the little he had, which was a surety, he was only casting away for that of which no one could tell what it would amount to; his son was now grown,

and knew more than his simple father, so he must look to himself for advice. Then she confided to him his reason for this, which she knew, and it softened him somewhat; but he thought that if this fine miss would not take Morten in his present position, she was not worth pursuing. His mind was turned against her for having led Morten astray, and he was frequently a bit querulous toward Marina, because he felt that she thought otherwise. He once exclaimed that there was "too much self-pride in it all to be right."

The prices Morten bid Mathis Nutto for his skins in exchange for goods the following summer pleased the latter so greatly that one day, of his own accord, he asked him to accompany them across to Karasuando, where he promised him any quantity of skins.

During this time, Morten had many doubts which he did not confide to his parents. There were many lacks in his new outfit; soon one commodity gave out and then another, whereas trade ought to keep its even way, so that customers may not be offended for lack of supply, or acquire mistrust. The sloop with which he had expected a new stock from Trondhjem came alongside Skorpen at the last moment, when in despair he thought that a couple of days would find him compelled to let the people go because the shop was empty.

He had assured himself of the Kven's relinquish-

ment of Finn Point for the consideration of a yearly rent and other profits, if he also won the consent of Mathis Nutto and his sons.

The autumn was advanced, and the Finns were already on their tedious march high up in the Norse mountain-peaks near the boundary line, when his brother Eilert one day, to his unspeakable relief, made his appearance, and took charge of matters at Finn Corner.

He was ready to leave the very next day. He filled a knapsack with some goods from the shop,—mirrors, handkerchiefs, etc.,—suitable for presents when he should arrive at his destination, crossed the sound that afternoon, and had already made a good piece of the journey across the mainland.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FINLAND JOURNEY—SILVER SARA.

AFTER a couple of days' hard foot-travel, he found himself a guest in Mathis Nutto's tent. He had but little money with him, as most of it was needed for the business of the shop, and he hoped to be home again about Christmas-time, in order to arrange for supplies.

As to the undertaking he had before him, he hoped to win a support in Mathis Nutto, and Lyma's husband as well, no less an influential person in Karasundo. If these two families sold him their skins, many would follow their example, and Finn Corner would become a trade-point.

The march with the twelve hundred reindeer, the motley crowd, large and small, composing the four households of the Nutto family, proceeded, in a hazy, wet atmosphere, through the greater part of the valley on the Norse side, and gradually passed on over the lonely mountain wastes.

Out on the endless sea of rock, the Lapp takes his way, with his remarkable instinct for piloting himself by old landmarks familiar from his childhood, guided by the moss which always grows on

the south side of the rocks, and by the stars. "North Needle," "The Virgin Group," "The Bows," and "The Ship," are his names for the North Star, the Pleiades, the Great Bear and Orion. With the morning and evening stars, these form the blinking points on his blue chart of the heavens.

Among the wave-formations of the gray mountain, there is sometimes, on its top, one or another peculiarly-shaped boulder, which, from the many horns strewed about the spot, one can see has been the object of the Finn's worship. Such an one, which they silently passed, received, also unseen by Morten, in all secrecy, its tribute from Mathis Nutto, who, though a Christian, did not desire to be in disfavor with the God of the Lapps by departing from the customs of his fathers.

An old, gray-haired woman, who had joined the company up in the valley, and who was most fantastically clothed with all sorts of pendants in brass and silver—under her fur she wore a broad silver belt,—knelt for a long time, making her grimaces more openly, before the stone, which, according to the old heathen doctrine, she, as a woman, ought not to approach.

She was known as "Silver Sara." She was half a wanderer in habit, and considered a prophctess, who was mistress of all arts, wherefore her advice was secretly asked by many, and she was generally feared.

The march kept straight on across the mountain

pasture. They were anxious to find for the animals moss which had not been grazed for the last ten or fifteen years,—for this is the length of time required for the regrowth of the moss,—and on every such patch they would gladly halt for several days. Now and then, quite unexpectedly, a deep valley would open, invisible until they reached its very edge—a gigantic fissure in the lofty mountain's plain. Below this stood the dwarf birches in among the ferns and brakes; the grassy slopes, with the clouds of fog, broke by the midday sun, overhanging them, while their loftier sisters beneath, in the calm, clear, autumnal day, mirrored their golden-leaf crowns in the still, bright water, whose surface was only ruffled by the spring of a fish, or the wing of a mountain bird flying low across it, frightened by the noise and shouts of the approaching train, or the rifle of the Finn, which reëchoed among the hills.

At this late season of the year, the Lapps' migration across the mountains was usually rendered dismal and hard by frequent snow-fog. They willingly encounter this, that the snow as early as possible may spread its warm covering over the moss-fields before the hoar-frost covers them with so thick a sheet of ice that the shovel-formed hoof of the reindeer, which throws the snow to one side, is unable to break through with its fore-feet and paw up the moss for itself and young.

On this occasion, unfortunately, the signs seemed to predict such weather. The hitherto mild, though cloudy, atmosphere changed, and the clear, golden-purple days were followed by still, cold nights, which spread a sparkling, starry dome, with but a faint rim of aurora, over the endless mountain-waste, across which the tents were now moved in forced diurnal marches. The degree of cold at night was indicated by the moss-hollows, which the black-frost covered with an ever-thicker coating of ice, and with the heavy rime, which gave a thousand glittering tints to the stones and threads of the moss. The evening and morning red fills the greater part of the day with rare, gold-tipped clouds, at this season of the year, and lends a peculiar arctic coloring to everything. Beneath, in the mountain valleys, the birches sparkled in the faint, slanting rays of the midday sun. On their white branches were only left a remnant of their golden leaves as the reindeer snapped at them when their masters pushed their way through, or a frightened ptarmigan flew up.

In these doubtful days, Mathis Nutto's spirits were at a low ebb, and Silver Sara's charms for the moment were not in favor, for he believed that either she had secretly marked him out for the anger of the "Stable Sprite," or some other mountain-spirit, or that she was perverse and unwilling to "change the weather." In his need for sympathy, he told

Morten, one day, that his dead wife could "control the weather," and trace the road, in mist or snow-fog, whenever the best of the mountain Finns stood in doubt.

Silver Sara looked almost witch-like in her wildness as she walked along in her broad fur cloak, with her gray locks around her yellow, sunken face. Her eyes burned like two coals, and she supported her bent figure on a staff.

She kept aloof from the others, and would sing and mumble to herself for hours. Probably she felt what was demanded of her, and that her credit was endangered.

Morten could not determine whether she regarded him with friendly eyes or not. The first day she said, kindly, that he was so fine and fair, and that she read good fortune in his face; but she now kept herself at a distance, and from one of Mathis Nutto's sons-in-law he heard that she had mumbled something about the strange man's being no advantage to the journey. He suspected that he risked being held responsible for the black frost, if the weather did not change.

One afternoon she suddenly began to make remarkable grimaces before Mathis Nutto's tent door. She had out her enchanted box, and predicted a change in the weather soon, and therewith was very enraged against Mathis, insisting that he had slighted some mountain sprite. A number of ceremonies were enact-

ed in Mathis's tent that evening, at which neither the occupants of the other tents nor Morten Jonsen were present; and thereupon there was singing and drinking of brandy by one and all of the family, in the principal tent, until bedtime. The brandy did not fail to affect the different persons sitting in a half-circle about the fire; they were very merry, and Morten had the impression that they were celebrating a festival, the real significance of which they would not explain.

During all this time, old Mathis sat, a little withdrawn from the rest, in his accustomed place near the fire, puffing away at his short stump of a pipe. What an artful cleverness lay in that genuine Finnish face, with its broad, low brow, oblique, brown eyes, high cheek bones and pointed chin!

At supper, besides reindeer meat and the usual victuals, extra dishes and delicacies were served, prepared by the daughters-in-law.

Silver Sara's stock had evidently risen again since she predicted a change of weather. Meantime, the prospect was not favorable, as the following day was as cold and clear as those previous had been.

Silver Sara was irritable and restless, while the other faces openly wore a look of anxious suspense.

Later on in the day she seemed more quiet and confident again. In the evening, when the folk who remained from watching the deer were encamped

about the fire, chatting, Mathis happened to mention Big Lars, whom he had known out on Skorpen; and Morten then spoke of how he had lived with his parents at home, and been the comrade of his childhood. At last he told, by their request, the details of his death.

It was strange to see Silver Sara then, who had been leaning on her staff in the shadow, behind the others, involuntarily advance, step by step, nearer to the speaker, and stand, breathlessly listening. She stood so long after he had finished.

Morten could not rid himself of the impression which this made upon him.

During the night, he lay awake for a time. The lamp, filled with reindeer fat, with a rush for a wick, burned dimly, hung from the rafter above the half-extinguished fire, where the clothes and shoes were hung to dry, and in whose warm ashes one or more of the tired dogs now faintly barked in their sleep. The usual dense smoke had lifted to the top of the tent. The members of the family, except the two near him, who were within the rays of light, lay further back in the gloom, on their several beds of reindeer-skins, spread over bundles of faggots, which formed the floor.

Then it seemed to him that he saw a shadow rise from that part of the tent where Silver Sara's bed lay, and vanish in the circle of sleepers, until it again

appeared near the foot of his own bed. There it remained lying, for a time, like a being fallen prostrate to the earth. He thought he heard low, suppressed sighs, whereupon the shadow again arose and glided back into the darkness.

This mysterious conduct on the part of Silver Sara,—for it could be no one else,—set his imagination to work in the lonely hours of the night.

In his dreams, her form assumed the most remarkable shapes. It grew colossal, and stood in the center of a circle, where the others lay laughing and singing, and with wild gestures and flowing hair “conjured up a storm.” A tempest howled about her form while she threatened with her staff, at the same time calling upon her Finnish divinities.

He was wakened by a great noise and many shouts;—it was as if his dream had become a reality, for he felt a cold wind whistling about him in the darkness.

A snow-storm had blown up during the night, and had torn away one side of the tent. Its violence forced Mathis Nutto to remove his tents into the lee of the mountain-cliff, where the deer, of their own accord, had also sought refuge through the snow. There they were snow-bound for two dark days, during which the storm-gusts now raised and now swept away huge drifts of snow.

Silver Sara’s power was again confirmed by this

event, for, as the change in the weather had come unexpectedly, and just after her prediction, no one doubted that she had caused it. She received their many evidences of acknowledgment with a reserved dignity. That she was able to read certain signs unknown to others, or feel the changes of the atmosphere in her rheumatic limbs, was now the prosaic interpretation of Morten Jonsen, which, however, he wisely kept to himself.

What impressed him much more was Silver Sara's noticeable friendliness toward himself ever since the evening he had talked about Big Lars. There was an almost humble attachment in her bearing. She would sit of an evening near the fire and grease his Lapland boots, which snitable foot-covering Norsemen gladly avail themselves of also on such trips, and fill them with fresh dry grass. One evening he secretly observed her as she sat near the fire at this work. He discovered that she raised the finished shoes to her lips before setting them away. This incomprehensible conduct on her part puzzled him not a little; but he also noted that her friendship was of great value to him among the Finns.

They had now crossed the great mountain-wastes, and gradually reached the lower ridges over on the Swedish side, where the lakes begin, and the barren character of the moss-grown moors is softened. The thinly-frozen bogs would not yet bear the deer, and

the train therefore kept as near the ridge as possible. The picturesque summer dress, with the tolle-knife hanging from the handsome belt, had been changed, in the cold and snow of the mountain, for the red-bordered, fur-edged cloaks and the square fur hats trimmed in the same fashion, which could be comfortably turned down over the ears. The Lapp now wore a peculiar kind of snow-shoes,—one short and the other long,—and warm fleeced overshoes.

It was winter, and the snow lay deep when they at last reached the Lapp village, where a few huts, partly occupied, stood grouped together, with the snow tramped down around them; and the hearths were lighted in their own four huts, only the snow-laden peaks of which could be seen.

The Finns were now for some months permanently settled again, while the deer were watched further up on the mountain-wastes, where they sought the moss under the snow.

In these quiet winter months the mountain Lapp makes himself comfortable. He pays great heed to cleanliness: bathing the feet is the duty of the women, according to old custom.

Christenings, confirmations and weddings take place at this time down at the distant church, a good day's journey off, and these festivities are carried on amid renewed associations of the several families.

Lyma's astonishment was great at seeing her old

friend again. The heart of the Finn lies near the lip, and she never ceased wondering that he had become such a strong, handsome man. He, on his part, found that the years had told somewhat upon the handsome Lyma. Five children had been born to her since that time; the youngest was now to be baptized. But the dark eyes, in which all the warmth of a Finn heart glowed, and the childlike, winning ways, were still hers. This was apparent in all her eager inquiries after Marina, her unrestrained happiness over his presents, and her merry laughter at reminiscences of the old days, which she gradually revived.

Her husband, Isak Pelto, laughed with her; his wife's happiness seemed to impart itself to him, and he would not yield until Morten had assented to move from Mathis Nutto's hut to his own.

The following days he spoke to Lyma of the object of his trip, and at last also of his plan concerning a trading-post down at Finn Corner. He told her that his future was dependent on his success in this, and begged her to help him so far as she was able.

Lyma's face wore an anxious look, as if she had not the heart to speak out her real meaning. She well remembered all the dissensions with Stuwitz on this account, and how stiff Mathis Nutto had been. Her husband had not been favorable to the matter either; "but one can persuade him now," she added,

smiling somewhat roguishly. After all, Silver Sara, whose favor for him she had heard him relate with wonder, was perhaps the one who could best help him. It was doubtful, however, whether they ought to trust her; she had been the soul of the former resistance to Stuwitz. Lyma finally earnestly advised him to keep silence as to his intentions, until she had sounded further, and had had time to win her husband over to his interest.

Meanwhile he traded for valuable skins of the silver bear, silver fox, ermine, etc., in no insignificant quantities, not only with Mathis Nutto, his sons and Isak Pelto, but with other Finns also, and felt that he was in a fair way to gain both their confidence and favor. It was agreed that one of Mathis' sons should bring the skins down in the spring to a certain place in the Norse valley, whence he could fetch them. What he bought of others he intended to take with him. His greatest anxiety now was that so much time had passed: it was already nearing Christmas, and the shop was probably out of goods. The hard choice was before him, of either returning home without having effected his purpose, and with his business half done, or of letting the shop-trade go to ruin. With a heavy heart he chose the latter.

On week-days the men amused themselves by driving in sledges to various — sometimes distant — Finn towns, in “search of stray deer,” as they usually

said. But often this was only a pretext for a comfortable chat and a treat of brandy and coffee.

On such trips, now with one and now with another, Morten was fortunate in making acquaintances, and concluding a series of trades; but here, too, difficulties appeared, concerning which Silver Sara one day informed him that they originated with a couple of buyers who were enraged at the high prices he offered.

He had promised Lyma to stand godfather to her son the first baptismal Sunday. She had named the child Martin* for him and his mother.

After church there was a sort of market also.

Up to Saturday, many companies—group after group—of Finns, in sledges, passed down across the snow-decked valleys to the church. While under way, the Finn balances his sledge with his body, now and then supporting himself against the crust by one of his deerskin-mittened hands. If the pacing deer becomes tired and impatient, it sometimes turns upon its master, who, quick as lightning, casts his sledge over himself, while the raging animal belabors the bottom with its horns and fore-feet. As soon as the attack is over, the Lapp gayly rights the sledge again and continues his way until he deems it time to exchange the draught-deer for the pack-deer, which follows behind fastened by a rope.

From the side valleys other church-goers gradu-

* Martin for Morten and Marina.

ally appeared, falling into line behind the crowd, wending their way across the white country in their red caps like a long, bright-colored, variegated cord, now disappearing among the birches, now visible again on the hills along the river. Down on the frozen stream,—the Lapp's own royal road, when cataracts do not forbid his driving,—the train was constantly augmented.

When they halted on a holm in one of the snow-covered lakes, late in the afternoon, the greater part of the church congregation had assembled. After some disturbance, because a couple of the party had driven their deer across a drag-line, order was restored. The snow-shoes, which lay on the provision sledges, were thrust as stakes into the snow. The draught animals were tied to these, and white moss strewed before them, while they stood scraping in the snow for more. The women took out reindeer meat, tongue, cheese, and other such things, from the sledges, while the brandy-flasks appeared from the breast-pockets of the men, where they had been put by for the severe cold.

It is a solemn sight to see all this host, in the clear, cold afternoon, out on the barren snow-holms, when they uncover their heads, in Finn-Lapp custom, and kneel in prayer before meal-time. Morten felt as if he were in a church larger than any he had ever yet entered.

Later they were merry enough, and broke up after some hours' time, when the moon had already risen. A couple of deer had slipped loose, and had first to be caught. When its master moves in search after it, the line, suddenly thrown, darts like a black shadow across the snow. The animal feels the rope about its horns and rises on its hind-legs while the Lapp draws him toward him. The angry animal's fore-feet strike at last upon its master's thick coat-collar, which he has turned up, and which, when it is made of thick bear-skin, scarcely lets him feel the blows.

They had expected to reach the church huts at two or three o'clock in the morning; but a thick fog, which overtook them on one of the larger lakes, compelled the line to make another halt, as they found they had been traveling in a circle for an hour, and had returned to their old trail.

The wooden church lies on the bank of a river, with an outlook over the valley, which is full of gravelly knolls, left by the stream, and there is a small birch-grove in the churchyard. The north side of the minister's house-wall is exposed to the weather, and in winter is usually buried in drifts to the peak of the gable, while windows and doors are kept partially free by shoveling away the snow. There was a noisy stir in the church huts that Sunday forenoon, which ceased only when the service began and the crowd streamed into church. With the exception of

the minister's family, who sat on the bench near the pulpit, beside the sheriff and the sacristan in half Finnish garb, the congregation consisted almost entirely of mountain Finns, who very devoutly listened to the sermon. Lyma's child was baptized with several other little ones, and then a marriage service was performed.

The ceremony was in accordance with Swedish custom: a couple of young men holding a silk kerchief—the pell—over the bride, who stood in her handsome Finn dress, with a crown on her head, while the groom had a white scarf bound across his breast and around his wrist.

In red-bordered jacket, with white bear-skin collar, and glass beads adorning her breast, a trimmed helm-shaped hat, from which red ribbons fluttered, and with fine little white Finnish boots turned up at the toes, and handsome tasseled ribbons around her ankles. Thus was the bride dressed, and, as she came flying on her *skees* (snow-shoes) down to church with her staff in hand and her face freshened by the wind, she was a real beauty.

Down at the church huts, meanwhile, noisy scenes were taking place, caused by earnestly-expressed opinions concerning a “holy priest,” and, perhaps, no less by the secret sale of brandy by the dealer, in spite of the day, and the danger he ran of being punished for Sabbath-breaking.

Acquaintances met with the half embrace, and customary greeting of "*burist, burist,*" offering the bottle. There were two groups,—the one standing about a long-bearded Russian merchant from the east, the other around a confidential clerk from Gamvik, in the interior, who, ready for his departure, stood in Finn cloak and Norse fur cap, concluding bargains for his principal.

A third person, who attracted Morten's attention more than the other two, was a tall, brutal-looking fellow in a fur cap and woolen coat reaching nearly to his feet, and, for the rest, dressed like a Swedish peasant. He was a merchant, living seventy miles southward, and who, until strangers had latterly begun to force their way into the market, had virtually controlled the entire fur trade in these parts. He was the person whom Silver Sara had previously pointed out to Morten as his maligner in the Finn town above, and felt, by many things, that his person that day, in a marked degree, was the object of the other's active hostility. The man, who usually stood with a brandy-bottle in his hand, filling the glasses of a group of his customers, had twice passed him, and each time, apparently without design, roughly pushed against him in his haste without offering an apology.

From the circle surrounding him, Morten now and then, as he passed by, heard snatches of sentences which were not agreeable to him, since he perceived

that they referred to himself, and they were received by these bystanders with peels of laughter.

Lyma, from her position further back, had caught the situation. She hurried over to him and bade him come with them, as they were all ready to start. Morten begged them to wait for him a quarter of an hour, as he would then have concluded his last trade for the day. He looked so composed that she was reassured, but her anxiety was renewed when she saw him slowly saunter in among the unfriendly groups, and then, as though nothing had happened, commence to bargain for a couple of skins. He half turned his back upon the Swedish tradesman, who, as before, stood with his olden-time brandy-bottle in hand talking, though in a somewhat lower voice, and no longer about him. When he heard the high price which Morten Jønsen now paid in cash—the very last that he possessed—he could not refrain from an angry, scornful exclamation. But that very moment Morten's face was close to his, with such a look in his eyes that the man involuntarily moved a step or two back. Morten laid his hand upon his shoulder and said coldly:

“You have pushed me roughly aside twice to-day, and both times forgotten to ask pardon; it was your intention, then?”

The man seemed to hesitate a little—he was a tall, heavy fellow,—but there was something in Mor-

ten's bearing which compelled him to lower his eyes and declare that he had not thought of offending him.

"I thought so," said Morten, mildly; "but it could do no harm to satisfy myself."

He had gained his object—to face the man amid his own troops,—and he bade one of them, whom he had just seen laughing, to carry the skins over to the sledge for him.

They began the journey home immediately, and at the baptism of Isak Peltó's child, Morten finally broached the subject of a trading-post at Finn Corner. This important affair, after much consideration back and forth, at last fell out to his satisfaction, he binding himself to respect the right of way for the deer, which they had had from earlier times. A paper was made out and signed by the parties concerned.

This fortunate conclusion was brought about chiefly, perhaps, by Mathis Nutto, he having looked upon Morten as Stuwitz's enemy.

Two days after this had been concluded, Lyma, one morning, bound his shoes on his feet, according to the Finnish custom of hospitality, and, weeping, wished him, from her tent door, "God's peace."

Her husband was to accompany him to a Finn town further north in the country, where he intended to make his last purchases, and get the rest of the skins which he was to take with him over the mount-

ain. There he met Silver Sara again, who during the winter wandered about in all the Finn settlements.

He soon discovered that the sentiment was not so favorable to him, with the exception of the man to whose hospitality Isak Pelto had recommended him, and who also at once sold him his stock of skins. He found the people strikingly surly. They were evidently prejudiced against him, and probably by the Swedish merchant. They had heard that he had traded for the possession of the Finn ground belonging to the Nutto family, and taken a deed of it; and this information had excited considerable irritation. Notwithstanding this difficult state of affairs, Morten determined to remain until his business was concluded.

Once, on opening one of his carefully-wrapped packages, he found a number of bare spots on the skins, and on close inspection discovered small bits of a dried, probably an eating, plant strewed among them. A blue vein swelled on his broad brow as he silently lifted and spread out package after package on the snow, to see how far the damage had extended, as well as to purify them. Fortunately, very few of the costly furs were spoiled. He thought best to say nothing about this; but his suspicion was awakened against the man in the neighboring tent,—a short, square-built Finn with hard features, who had daily

access to the tent, and who had but little power to conceal his unfriendly sentiments. His name was Josias Umek, and he was a sort of buyer for the Swedish merchant among the Finns in those parts. He was free with the brandy at that time in his tent, and made many exciting speeches, in which the previously mentioned information was made use of.

The circumstance which had first awakened Morten's suspicion against him occurred the very day after his arrival, when this man had offered himself as a guide to the nearest settlements. As they were driving an unruly animal through a closely-grown alder grove, while at full speed the sledge suddenly whirled on to an open place filled with loose ice. By his presence of mind he escaped the apparently fatal situation, but was badly hurt. The lines that drew the sledge were half cut off, and could not bear the weight when the sledge swerved. On his return, Silver Sara earnestly warned him against trusting himself to any other guide than the sons of the man whose guest he was, and in whose tent he lived.

The discovery of this tampering with the skins was a severe trial to Morten Jonsen's self-control; but his judgment told him that an open break would only serve his enemies, and his proper course was to keep silent. He remarked that his host often sat lost in thought during this time, and was usually at home, while his two sons, on the contrary, were

generally absent. Their manner toward him was somewhat evasive and reserved.

One afternoon there was an unusual stir in front of the tents. The deer had been gathered together to select some stray animals, about which there was question,—among the thousands, every mountain Finn knows his own animals.

Their jackets, white with frost, in the bitter cold, lay thrown upon the snow, while their owners, in woolen shirts, open at the breast, flushed and heated, were searching about among the restless animals with their leather reins over their shoulders.

As Morten Jonsen stood outside the tent door, viewing the scene, the lash of a leather thong, in the end of which there was probably a lead bullet, hit from behind so sharply on the tent-pole, near his head, that the tree split. He felt a sharp pressure of the air on his eye, as if a ball had whizzed past.

Josias Umek passed by just then, swinging the line anew over his head, as if he were absorbed in practicing a cast with it and had not noticed him, but his passionate eye and bearing lacked altogether the look of innocence.

Morten's anger at this unwarranted attack left him no time for self-control. With a spring, he set upon the offender, who had no chance to ward him off. Morten felt a certain relief in at last having open war.

For a moment his opponent, by his heavy fall, saw thousands of stars twinkling confusedly before his eyes, while the others stood idly by, not thinking of interference. Morten needed that minute for breath and reflection. Suddenly he let him loose and returned to the tent, when he told them that Josias had attempted to hit him, and pointed out to them the mark of the blow on the pole.

A gathering ensued. They shouted to each other, and seemed to sympathize with Josias, who, threatening and complaining over this attack, withdrew to his hut,—he had felt his enemy's hand, and did not care for another encounter.

Now that the rupture had, unfortunately, taken place, and their enmity become an open one, Morten perceived that his stay was anything but safe. The face of his host showed that he, also, was seriously alarmed. What might befall him on the lonely, lawless mountain he had already sufficient evidence of, and danger might lurk behind every snow-drift. On the other hand, he would not, except in extreme necessity, lose his hardly-won goods. He sat for a time considering the matter. It might be just as hazardous to fly as to remain, and, at all events, he would win nothing if he permitted his enemies to suspect that he was frightened. He therefore made a tour of the huts soon after, and chatted with the family in the evening as if nothing had happened;

they seemed to be greatly embarrassed. At heart, Morten did not feel his life secure on the approach of night, but he apparently slept as peacefully as usual;—in truth, he lay pondering over some outlet, or way of escape, until sleep overpowered him.

An hour after those who were to watch the deer the latter half of the night had dragged themselves out, he was awakened by a hand carefully touching him upon the shoulder. He was wide awake in an instant, and ready for that which he felt in his blood—danger. It was his host, Jens Ibmel, who whispered to him to dress himself. Outside, the deer stood ready, with his skins on the sledge, and one to accompany him over the mountains. It was no longer comfortable for him there, said Jens Ibmel, seriously, and it was best that he should leave before anyone thought he had the intention of doing so.

Morten felt that the whole family were awake, but that none of them, on account of the other Finns, would venture to be his companion, or have any share in his flight, whilst their hospitality, on the other hand, obliged them to endeavor to prevent any harm from befalling him.

He now heard that a paper was the especial cause of their vengeance,—the one which he had made out with Mathis Nutto, and in which these people, who had no interest in Finn Corner, believed themselves to be insulted. He took a secret cordial farewell of

his host, who had lent him two sledges for his goods and provisions, as well as the necessary number of exchange deer. He saw, to his surprise, that it was Silver Sara who was to guide him. She was already seated in her sledge with her dog by her side, and he learned afterward that it was she who had urged Jens Ibmel to bring about his departure so hurriedly.

A cut of the whip, a spring into the sledge, and they took leave of the Finn town, wending their way across the ridge in the cold, clear night. The great round moon, with its blue starry background, seemed to hurry them along the high ridges, while the auro-ra's electric flashes of red, green, violet and blue flame-belts, with its, in these regions, marvelous tones of color, for a moment vanished, and then again shot out over the heavens like a red billowy sea. The tongues of fire seemed at times almost to lick the snow-hills, and all the white, moonlit landscape was for a time without shadow.

In this interval, when it was so light that one could almost see a pin on the surface of the snow, Silver Sara's sledge and deer stood out in peculiar isolation before him. The natural surroundings, so grand in themselves, gradually grew into a most mysterious and awful silence, from which his senses found relief when the moon's shadows became again visible, and the outlines of the picture assumed their

natural proportions. He half felt that he was traveling alone at midnight, following a witch.

In the mystic light of the aurora, the Finn believes himself in the presence of departed spirits. He knows that the light permits itself to approach near the snow-hills if he waves a white sheet, and that it will vanish at certain sounds; and on such wonderful nights he sees the underground people with their herds of deer with gleaming horns, flying before the aurora, which pursues them with its tongues of fire.

Their journey continued in unbroken speed across the interior toward the mountain, with Silver Sara's dog unweariedly barking in advance and guiding them the entire night and until the noon of the next day, when they took a short rest at a deserted hut to thaw some reindeer meat. From her face and few words he judged that she feared Josias Umek and his comrades would perhaps have started in pursuit of them in the morning. The lading deer were changed, and they hurried on during the afternoon and evening until, at a late hour, they at last stopped at another deserted hut.

Here they gave the animals and themselves some hours of rest, when toward morning they were again on their way. It was only after two and a half days' journey, on reaching the mountain-waste, that Silver Sara made longer halts, and she then seemed to feel more secure. She said that it was a six-days' journey

over to the place, in the Norse valley, where he would himself know the way and she might leave him.

One evening they were overtaken on the waste by a furious snow-storm. For a time Silver Sara laboriously sought the position of the moss on the stones, and other signs to indicate the path, but was at last obliged to give up as lost, and stop. Her proceedings meantime sustained his courage. She quietly placed the sledges and animals together, and put all in order for them to be snowed in. They were obliged to spell each other in turning their skees in the sides of the drift in order to make a breathing-hole in their warm snow-chambers.

The storm raged the following day also. He noticed that Silver Sara often fell to pondering, and it seemed as if the old woman had something on her heart. Hers was a face which, despite its shriveled shell and its usual bitter look, might well have been beautiful in her youth,—at any rate this occurred to him when looking at her once, while he was in secret wondering what could have induced this remarkable woman, in her manner so harsh, to make such sacrifices for him.

She must have read something of this wonder in his face, for soon after, in the dusk, she began in a low tone to talk with him. She sat with her face in her hands, and Morten soon found that she was speak-

ing of Big Lars, and seeking to give vent to her heart's sorrow, to him. It was a thick shell, hardened by the growth of years, which now,—amid a constantly growing emotion, until her voice became almost inaudible,—burst under the hidden bitterness and misery of a despairing heart.

She was the Kven maiden whom Big Lars had loved, and who had been enticed on board Wassilieff's sloop, "now over twenty years since," she said,— "and God has let me live longer than I desired."

"Wassilieff had promised to take me for his wife, but he did not keep his promise. When, later, I wandered home on foot, over the mountain from Russia, with my child on my back, wolves and bears might have taken me and welcome, so indifferent was I to life; for I thought it impossible for me to come again to Lars, though my whole soul drew me thither. Aimless I wandered, as in a fog, and of the whole, remember only that I nourished myself with cloudberries, and got milk for the child at the huts, after I had no more for it myself. Down in the inclosed fields near Olsvaag, which old Corporal Stuwitz owned at that time, his son came across me. I became their servant, and was as obedient to him as a dog. He said I ought to be glad when my child died; I buried it on the mountain. Since then I have heard it many times crying up in the fields.

"When Stuwitz went to Brogelmann, in Kolle-

fjord, he placed me at service with the mountain Finn, Jakob Nutto, brother of Mathis. He had many dealings with him—not all of them good, for Jakob had helped care for the goods from a vessel which they had plundered at sea. There was a trial about it at court, and I could have told what would not have pleased them about where the goods were hidden. Stuwitz relied on me, for he knew I was obedient in everything, and I helped him to exchange for silver round about, both in the south and north, the rix-dollar notes which he had hidden under a plank in the floor over in Olsvaag.

“One summer I went to my mother’s and lay sick there. She told me that Stuwitz had helped Wassilieff at the time that they got me on board the sloop. Then Lars came in one day and spoke to me, and looked so pityingly on me,—but I could not answer him, and replied only in my delirium. During the night I fled, going to Olsvaag, a day’s journey distant.

“I felt that I, a poor down-trodden worm, could avenge myself, and the next time Stuwitz came to Olsvaag, his silver money was gone. I knew it cut him sorely, but he dared not make inquiries concerning it. I went to Jakob Nutto one day with the paper money, saying I had questioned the spirits over in the mountain. From that day I was called Silver Sara, and they believed more and more that I could

perform wonders. I let them retain their belief in me, and many times believed in it myself,—because I hated God and all mankind, and thought the evil spirits were with me. Since those days I have wandered over all Finmark, and a stranger's roof has always sheltered me. I was only careful to avoid going where I knew Lars was. I see him often in dreams, and he has always asked me what I have done to the child; but last night he asked me if I were not soon coming home from Russia.”

When Morten now, with deep earnestness, told what Lars had said,—that he expected to meet her in a better place,—she fell to thinking, and later she sat bowed over and weeping violently, but without speaking. .

The next morning they started on as usual, only she was silent the whole day. Morten thought he recognized one spot again; they were driving past the votive stone to which Mathis Nutto in all secrecy had offered his tribute. This human-like head now stood with a snow-crest beetling from its brow, and with bluish-green icicles hanging as a beard. It rested there alone like the mysterious sphynx of the mountain-waste.

Silver Sara made a momentary halt and sat still in her sledge, as if she fought with some internal force, but suddenly struck the deer with her reins, and the spot soon lay far behind them. The journey continued

still another day, with a rest at night. The next forenoon they came to a slope from which a view opened across and down the valley on the Norse side, and here they made a halt. She strewed moss for his deer, and pointed out to him decided landmarks across to the nearest settlement; for they were to separate here.

Morten in vain sought to induce her to receive compensation,—all he could do was to thank the old woman. She already stood in her sledge, when she again came to him, leaning upon her staff, and with wet eyes, and as if hesitating a little, asked:

“Do you think the minister in K—vaag,” — she meant Dean Muller — “would admit a sinner like me to the communion?”

When Morten seriously answered yes, her old face brightened with so soulful an expression, that he felt he had unexpectedly had the good fortune to repay her for the journey.

Morten Jousen now drove on alone. As he sat in his sledge and thought over the trip, it seemed to him as though he had experienced an enchantment. All his knowledge concerning Stuwitz gradually collected in his thoughts like a storm-cloud. After some reflection, his practical judgment told him that all these half-discernible threads would not form a legal charge against him. What he had learned of his mother's birth came only from a single and now dead witness, her foster-father — the old sea Finn, Isak Lovo; and

Silver Sara's information concerning the bank notes, which could scarcely be any but those stolen from the wreck, was, after all, an old detached story, whose connection could now only be verified in the guilty conscience of old Stuwitz himself. There was something deeply bitter to him in the thought.

He had always been too fully absorbed in the purpose of making a future for himself, to have felt any temptation to make it the object of his life to trace out the possibilities of the past, although they had, in a way, been a spur to him. They troubled him less as with a restless mind he now hurried on to retrieve what he could from the loss he must have suffered by the closing of the shop, and his mind was soon wholly filled with plans concerning this matter.

As with an oppressed heart, one forenoon in winter, he crossed the sound with the *Kven*, he would not question those who rowed him. It was February, just the beginning of the fishing season, and he wondered not a little — but did not venture to take hope therefrom — at the number of people standing about, and the ten-oared boats at the landing. In a few springs he took the path from the boat-landing to the shop, and saw a large frame addition, in which his brother Eilert stood busily trading with a knot of peasant fishermen, who were crowding each other about the space in front of the counter, and his father was just carrying a package over to the shop.

Eilert saw him first. His face flushed, but he appeared quite unconcerned as he continued with the customers before him.

In the glance Morten received from him lay the assurance that all must be in order, and the warehouse seemed to be well supplied; on the way home his father solved the riddle for him. When the shop was nearly empty, at Christmas-time, they had been in great doubt as to what they should do; but Eilert had one day resolved to collect all his ready cash and take a sloop going south to Trondhjem. He had paid the merchant there in his brother's name, ordered new goods, and by his prompt payment received new and ample credit, so that they were now more than supplied for the fishing season. Morten perceived that he had a good confidential clerk already in his brother, and was deeply thankful to him.

On reaching home, he related to his parents the result of his trip, which had been fortunate in every respect, but all traces of doubt vanished from the face of Jon Zachariasen only when he showed him the deed of the ground. His face brightened, and Mariua seated herself quietly beside him. The two old people now caught a glimpse of a future which they — as life had taught them to look upon everything at the hardest — had not ventured to set their hopes upon.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANDREAS.

WHILE Morten Jonsen, aided by the advantageous situation of his trading-post, in the course of the following two years is making one fortunate hit after another, followed by the praise and renown which the world gladly gives to those who are successful, and becomes an important personage in the district, we will go back a little and inform the reader about Andreas Heggelund.

Down in Christiania, Andreas had everywhere passed as the adopted son of Heggelund. He was liberally supplied with money, and among the students went by the name of "rich Heggelund." His good-hearted, lively manners, the fact that he was always ready to lend to his friends, and always free and noble in all his actions, soon brought a circle of comrades about him. He passed for a good fellow, was a sort of lion in the college societies of students, constantly attended the theatre, and busied himself, as did all the circle about him, in polite literature. He was invited to balls and parties, and was constantly engaged.

The enthusiasm for work, which during the latter

part of his stay at home had animated him, gradually disappeared again,—it was essentially a loan from his energetic friend, Morten, while his impressionable nature was under the influence of the latter's example and personality,—at all events his reading progressed very slowly.

Andreas' letters were at that time the delight of Heggelund and his wife, although they always concluded with a demand for money. Heggelund generally read the latest to the good friends who visited them; indeed, he now and then—with the letter in his pocket—called upon the Judge, where he would, apparently without premeditation, read it, and in the latter's daughter, Julie, would find a very eager listener. They had gotten the impression, from all sorts of university stories, that the life was one of “study,” and an examination, after a certain number of years, would result as a matter of necessity.

Then came Fru Heggelund's death, which he felt deeply, and from that time his letters from home were never cheerful, in spite of the easy tone in which his uncle always wrote to him. Now and then his remittances came much later than he expected, which, to his surprise, led him to suspect that it might not be so easy for his uncle to provide them. This fact did not cause Andreas any real embarrassment, for he was clever at making debts, and received good credit on his uncle's name.

He had too clear a head, however, not to have his suspicions, at times, that everything was not as it should be at home; but, with his too easy nature, readily diverted by pleasure, he would not long dwell upon such reflections, notwithstanding that some of Edel's later letters might well have caused him to do so.

The news of the auction, and the general state of affairs at home, therefore came upon him as a complete surprise. It fairly stunned him. He felt at once that his prospects in life were materially darkened, and in his extreme way abandoned himself almost to despair. His sanguine nature soon raised a ladder of bright hopes again. From various good friends he got a loan, large enough, with economy, to continue his course in Christiania for a year, at least. During this time he developed a remarkable energy, and immediately resumed his reading with great assiduity. His nature, always requiring a spur, had received one in these recent and unexpected circumstances.

It wakened no little sensation in the world of students when it was reported that rich Heggelund had begun to read with no less than two tutors.

He passed his examination successfully, and went home to his uncle's house the same summer, where he remained for a time. At home, although as lovable as before, he was a more self-sufficient and opin-

ionated gentleman than when he left them. He gladly passed for an authority, but marked, to his discomfiture, that Edel did not absolutely bow in blind submission to his opinions. Though their relation was most friendly, still he found that her tone was sometimes a little sarcastic, which gave rise to slight collisions, and caused Andreas, at such times, to keep silence, and feel a bit offended. His remarks indicated a self-important consciousness of the ennobling effect of an academic culture — “that alone which made a man a gentleman in our land,” he said. Edel never disputed directly with him, but he could not tolerate the manner in which she replied, or, more properly speaking, oftenest did not reply. He could not tell whether she was angry or making fun of him.

He had several times visited Morten Jonsen, and been received with all the old, glowing friendship; but, occupied as the latter always was with his business, there was no opportunity for the intercourse which he had anticipated.

Morten had already erected, on Finn Point, a large warehouse, and some out-houses,—buildings made necessary by the constantly increasing business,—while a small, one-storied house, with large window-panes, and in modern style, contained only a single half-lighted room for his own use. He was busy early and late, and had but little time to give

to his friend. Andreas noticed that, without fail, he always asked incidentally after Edel, and he soon discovered that with this theme he could retain him inside as long as he pleased. He felt somewhat uncomfortable at this interest, although it was not precisely clear, even to himself, that it was disagreeable to him, and he would always turn the conversation.

In spite of all his love affairs since the time when Julie Schultz was his star, Andreas, in the usual modest way of cousins, had always felt a secret assurance of the first right to his cousin, and now that he had seen her matured, and — what he was not blind to — a remarkably handsome woman of her type, she had, more than all his former loves, for the very last time, — so he thought himself, at any rate — become the object of his desires. He could only feel anxious and hurt at the discovery he felt he had made concerning his friend's feelings, and his remarks about the importance of an academic training, as well as the vexation he displayed, were connected therewith.

On the different occasions that Morten and Edel had met abroad, recently, these conclusions seemed anything but probable. Andreas had, at first, taken pains to tell them at home what a man Morten Jonsen was going to make, and pictured this with his accustomed animation. Later, he was markedly silent concerning him. On Edel these depictions had produced a curious effect, and when she now met Morten

there was a friendly chill in her bearing toward him. He felt, with keen bitterness, that she was another person to him.

Once Andreas and she were on a visit to Dean Muller, and Morten Jonsen came hither, also, on an errand. He had just made a fortunate business hit, which had awakened attention, and this was spoken of by the Dean's family with warm appreciation, while he was there. The face which his eyes involuntarily fell upon looked indifferent, meantime, and he thought he discovered a certain scornful or contemptuous expression about her lips. He grew pale, but apparently took no notice, and hurried his departure,—only on taking leave he was very cold in his manner.

He had determined to confide what he had learned of his mother's birth, and more recently about the notes from Silver Sara, to his old fatherly friend, the Dean, who had always shown interest and sympathy for him. He desired his advice as to how he ought to act in reference to Stuwitz, for the conduct of the latter toward him, as his rival in the district, had vexed him in many ways of late, and had awakened the desire, in one way or another, to make this man's true character generally known.

The Dean listened quietly in his study to all that Morten had to tell him. He knew himself still more from the confessions of Isak Lovo and Silver Sara,

but his lips were sealed by his pledge of secrecy. Nevertheless, he could give that advice which seemed to him best with a free conscience. Except what he had direct proof of would, he said, be considered by the people as the fruit of a rival's jealousy; and if it was only for revenge on Stuwitz, then he must remember that revenge belongs to another. "This saying is now confirmed by my long experience," he concluded — "that no one rides so fast that our Lord will not sometime overtake him! And believe me, young man, he will also overtake Stuwitz, even if our eye shall not see it."

The result was that Morten Jonsen gave up his plans of revenge, though, in the bitterness of his heart, he was none the less desirous of combat.

He went home and sought to imagine everything except the truth in regard to Edel. Was the cause of her changed conduct the fact that Andreas had returned? — he had jealously remarked that she was always very confidential with him. Or did all that which he had accomplished seem insignificant to her? Others thought it remarkable enough. He would, at all events, show her that he could achieve still greater ends; and from now on he avoided meeting Andreas.

His mother saw by many things that he bore a heavy heart, and Jon sometimes shook his head, because it seemed to him that his son began to risk too much on one venture in his business. He said to

Marina that he was tempting the Lord, but so long as all went on successfully, nothing was to be said.

Once, after meeting Edel Heggelund, Morten returned home doubly bitter, and his mother, in a few broken words, gained his secret. Marina could readily enter into his desire to show this fine miss what he could accomplish, but Jon considered it an effort of vanity. He was the one in whose heart Edel stood at the lowest estimate, for he saw that she was the occasion of his son's going so unwarrantably and foolishly on to destruction; but he said nothing to his wife,—he was himself afraid to look into the future.

One evening Andreas sat up late. He wrote and tore up, and re-wrote, a love-letter to his cousin. He had written three before in his life, and his honor demanded that this last should differ from the rest. His courage would not admit of a personal demand for an answer—therefore, he had always made court by letter.

The next afternoon he sent his note by a messenger, while he absented himself on a boating trip until late at night.

The following days he was ashen-gray with despair,—Edel, in a short postscript, had said him nay in so cousinly and friendly a manner, and hoped that he would always, as before, remain her good cousin.

One twilight hour, at a later period, he discovered, however, that his real love had been his first one — for the Judge's daughter, Julie.

“Cousins are too nearly related.” To his shame, and more than shame, he had scarcely thought of her in all this time.

CHAPTER XV.

FINN POINT.

STUWITZ had watched Morten Jonsen's success in Finn Corner with great offense. He looked upon it as a direct robbery of himself, and was doubly angry to see the place occupied by Morten. Finn Corner was not only a pearl in itself, but the competition from that quarter affected his own trade very considerably.

He was an active enemy, and in his progress Morten had felt this in many ways. When he heard, one fall, that Morten had overspeculated on a large delivery of fish, he looked triumphant. He remarked to his shop people that he had always expected just this from that "wonder-worker" who had made so much breeze; and he mumbled to himself, no less pleased, when he heard that Morten had been obliged to go to Jackmann, down in Storvaag, and raise a large sum on his trading-post.

Stuwitz had a connection of many years' standing with this man, and some time after took a trip to his place.

Morten was very angry when, late and near the time of payment, he was advised by Jackmann that Stuwitz was now his creditor.

He had given his note to pay the amount in installments, but in case of failure in any one of these, as the terms usually are in such agreements, the entire principal should become due.

That Stuwitz, against the custom, would take advantage of this severe power, Morten Jonsen was well assured; but he well knew, also, that he had a yacht with a cargo of fish on the way to Bergen, and thus money in prospect. For, however much he might prefer to do otherwise, he would now pay the full amount.

He had, to his father's great anxiety, latterly begun to risk everything on one card, and the expedition of the sloop, whose cargo was almost entirely at his own risk, and in which the greater part of what he now possessed was involved, was again such a venture, for at that time there was no insurance, but the profit would cover the entire loss of the previous years.

Jon Zachariasen happened to be out on a trip for his son when he heard the news that the sloop had been wrecked down near Alster, in Northfjord. He perceived the seriousness of the matter, and went immediately to gain full and complete assurance at the spot whence the information had come on the previous day. Unfortunately, he found it to be all true, and that only a small part of the cargo had been saved.

He was gloomy as he journeyed home, for he felt that his son was at fault, but he would himself be the person to bring him the intelligence; it was, he thought, better that his father should come with it than a stranger.

That evening Jon sat alone with his son a long time, while he, pale, paced the floor back and forth. There came no chiding word from his mouth, but now and then a comforting one. He finally hit upon the plan of going to Jackmann, who had a mortgage on the place, and gaining delay and a new lease of time, "so that all might still be well."

When the son, with a dark look, told him that his creditor was no longer Jackmann, but Stuwitz, it grew black for Jon also, but he said only:

"Our Lord can help you even in that, also."

When he came home to Marina the two old people sorrowed together; but Jon was unusually mild. "Every one has his rock to clear," he said, apologetically, "and Morten's misfortune has been that fine miss."

Morten was obliged to let payment-day go by; and attended to his daily business with a heavy heart. Late in the summer he had been fortunate enough to collect together sufficient money to cover the installment due, and had sent the sum to Stuwitz; but the latter, notwithstanding, demanded payment in full. He had already taken the first legal steps, and the

news spread like wildfire that Finn Point would soon be put up at auction. It was easy to comprehend that Stuwitz meant to gain the trading-post for himself.

His last resource, though hard for his pride, was to go in to Stuwitz, and by personal persuasion try to obtain a delay, if possible, until the next spring. It was hard and humiliating, but the trial must be made, for else he risked that which was worse than the loss of Finn Point,—of coming into the position of not being able to give every man his due. It pained him, meanwhile, that Heggelund, as, naturally, everybody else who was cognizant of his position, would be able to guess the meaning of his visit to Stuwitz. They had followed his misfortune with heartfelt sympathy. Andreas had thereby lost his old resentment. Edel had once replied somewhat sharply when the opinion was expressed that Morten Jonsen's loss was partly his own fault, and Heggelund went about complaining to himself, half aloud, that that "handsome young man" should have fallen into Stuwitz's claws in so shabby a manner. Uncle Tobias looked sad also, and the house was, so to say, filled with sympathy for Morten Jonsen.

Against those who said that it was predicted that he would be bankrupt, they held to the opinion that the whole affair was surely a passing embarrassment.

The visit, postponed to rather a late hour, at last was made. He would not have the self-accusation

of not having done what he could to save the situation; his determination was taken. If Stuwitz would not be persuaded,—and this was only too probable,—he would, so soon as he could arrange his affairs, go to America. All that which had been the aim of his life had been overthrown, and he felt a bitter consciousness of the complete ruin.

Andreas was not with the Heggelunds at the time; but Heggelund himself, who had seen Morten come, met him down on the road, and in the heartiest manner invited him home. Morten, who understood that the former readily enough suspected his errand, thought it manliest to speak straight out:

“I am,” he said, in rather a faint voice, “going to Stuwitz, in order, if possible, to save Finn Point.”

Heggelund with a face of anger looked down toward Stuwitz’s house, and thereupon said earnestly, as he pressed his hand, as if to retain him:

“But promise me, Jonsen, that you will come up to us, whether it go well or not with that fellow,—it is still your old home.” Heggelund’s words and manner had evinced a deep-felt sympathy, and he promised, although he had previously intended to leave at once.

Stuwitz sat in his little narrow room in the shop, busy noting in one of his account-books, when Morten Jonsen arrived. He mumbled a little on seeing him, but continued uninterruptedly with his work, and did

not ask him to sit down; neither was there a place, except in a chair by his side. Morten knew from old times the expression of that face; it foreboded no good. At last it pleased Stuwitz to look up and say, shortly:

“I understand that you have come to pay me.”

“No,” replied Morten, “I came, unfortunately, to ask you for more time.”

“So—ah!” said Stuwitz, drawling, and apparently relieved, taking up his work again: “you have still until the auction-day for payment.”

There was something unspeakably oppressive in Stuwitz’s reply; he scarcely concealed his hope of soon owning Finn Point.

With great calmness, Morten, notwithstanding, urged the reasonableness of his demand; the installment due had been paid, and he declared his willingness to pay down two installments for one, or to pay the whole amount in the spring.

A shrug of the shoulders and an angry concluding growl, as he continued to write in his account-book, was the only answer.

Morten then remarked warmly that his former creditor, Jackmann, after the acknowledged custom, would not have demanded the full payment of the debt.

“No,” said Stuwitz, suddenly rising, and with the flat of his hand striking somewhat to the detriment of

the desk to conclude the talk,—“His name is Stuwitz, and not Jackmann, and I hope you will mark the difference!” He looked ugly and angry,—there was no doubt that he would show him the door.

Morten saw that he was inaccessible to every argument, and felt his last hope sink with this actual humility to Stuwitz. He had done all he could in the matter, and he felt almost relieved, for he had a burning desire, for once in his life, to tell the truth without compromise to this man who now set his foot on his neck. Instead of leaving, after this offensive conclusion, he seated himself, to Stuwitz’s astonishment, quite coolly on the edge of his bed.

What now passed between these two cannot be repeated in full.

Morten, so to say, slowly carved up Stuwitz’s youthful life joint by joint. He omitted nothing which he knew, and with icy irony showed up his connection with Heggelund. Over Stuwitz’s face came an indescribable craven fear; its tame, creeping expression reminded one of a wild animal anxiously prowling about in a wolf’s den, in which it has unexpectedly fallen. This gave place for a moment to a paroxysm of anger, during which he looked as if he would use violence. But a look of Morten’s made him seat himself again.

The mirror which was held up to him reflected meantime a picture which Stuwitz himself at last found exaggerated and unjust; and now he became

himself once more, for in the beginning he had laid morally under the weight of fear caused by all the reminiscences which so suddenly overwhelmed his conscience.

Morten Jonsen had come upon him heavily, but had forgotten only how fragmentary and free from danger his knowledge was, legally.

Whilst the pupil of his one weak eye quivered, Stuwitz said, with a teasing, patronizing smile:

“God protect us! — I only want my lawful right to Finn Point — and will have it, too. But wherever your respected mother came from is truly more than I can tell you,— if she is not written in the church records like other people.”

Morten’s face was pale with emotion; he looked Stuwitz right in the eye without being able to utter a word. At last he exclaimed, “Scoundrel!” and went to the door.

Stuwitz followed, and said scornfully as he passed out:

“You can also obtain justice! Only go to law with all the nonsense you have spoken here, my good Morten Jonsen! But you must seek for good witnesses, you know, else you will be punished as a slanderer.”

Morten still heard an ironical friendly “farewell” follow him.

When, after a long, lonely walk, he came, as he

promised, up to Heggelund's, his face still wore a trace of the excitement he had undergone.

He told them briefly that there was no more chance for Finn Point. He had thought so before, he said composedly, and therefore now resolved to go to America.

That which caused his straightforwardness was his pride,—for Edel was in the room,—but it was easy to see that the matter weighed heavily upon him,—he was very silent the whole evening.

Edel was pouring the tea when he spoke of America, and the cup trembled in her hand. He saw her pale, reserved sympathy, and felt, with a certain pain, that she had never been so dear to him as now. There was something in her manner of almost acknowledgment that she was at fault.

When he sat so still, it was not, as the others thought, Finn Point on which he dwelt, but that she who stood before his soul was lost to him.

Heggelund and Uncle Tobias had, as was their wont, gone early to bed, and he was for a time alone in the room; he sat and toyed with a breastpin which he held in his hand. A little after, Edel came down again. She was pale and serious.

As if he replied to what he suspected she had in her thoughts, he said with a sigh:

“Yes, I am going to America—I have nothing more to work for here!”

“Finn Point is not all of life,” she objected, without, however, looking at him.

“No, Miss Edel,” he exclaimed, overwhelmed by his emotion; “but you are my life!—for you I have worked,—of you I have thought.” He had risen, and was standing near her. And now he added, with a sad look, “I shall perhaps not see you again in this world, and pray you to keep a thing which is very dear to me—my mother’s breastpin,—I would be so glad to have you wear it.”

He was going to give her the pin, but the hand which received it trembled, and he read in her face and the lowered eyes, which immediately filled with tears as she looked into his, that she also loved him. He forgot all, and drew her to him; but a little after he drew back again, and said slowly, looking at her:

“But the future?”

“That we will build together,” whispered Edel, and placed her hand confidently in his.

When Tomfru Dyring looked in at the door, later, the two happy young people sat near the window in the pale moonlight.

In the morning, Edel was in her father’s room earlier than usual. She had a remarkable number of things to right and set in order; then she suddenly went to him and put her arms about his neck, so that he must ask what made her so happy, and she told him all. He received the news with as

great pleasure as if Morten Jonsen had just won, instead of lost, Finn Point; and it was decided that the engagement should be made known the next time he returned. That Jomfru Dyring suspected all, Edel was quite assured.

It was just at the time of the summer when the Finns used to stop at Skorpen, and the news that Finn Point was about to be put up at auction by Stuwitz had also reached them. Mathis Nutto had grown exceedingly morose thereat, for he saw his interests placed in serious danger again.

When Morten came home, several stood at the Point who sought quietly to read the result of his trip by his looks, and among them was Mathis Nutto. But the latter could gather from his face only a fortunate issue to his journey. He asked Marina, however, the following day. She looked discouraged, and he then learned how it had gone.

The Finn came again several times, and Marina remarked that he repeatedly and carefully asked the connection of the matter. The last time he came to borrow their twelve-oared boat for a trip of several days, but he did not tell them where he was going. In his tent at home he had for a time been very thoughtful, and at evening sat puffing away vigorously at his pipe.

One morning, as Stuwitz, according to his custom, was on his way down to open the shop, the old Finn

stood there waiting for him. He suspected that something disagreeable was about to happen, and, to avoid witnesses, sent the wharf-boy down to the warehouse. He sought to conceal his pleasure when the Finn said that he had come to exchange the rest of the old notes, and he feverishly grasped a package which he brought from his office. He was to possess the notes at last, for which he had felt a horror in his blood so many years.

Mathis meantime delayed drawing out his pocket-book, and now first came out with his own demands. He would have a paper and conditions that no auction should be held at Finn Point for the debt there;—the Finn said that the old decision between them was that Finn Point should be left in peace.

For a good while Stuwitz gave no answer; he was red in the face, anger and fear contended in it. These notes, now in his fear, presented themselves as weapons in the hand of Morten Jonsen, and he felt that he must pay for them whatever might be demanded.

Stuwitz tempted him in vain with several personal offers, but Mathis was unyielding, and Stuwitz finally acquiesced, as he said, by writing the declaration demanded, which he composed as a letter to Martin Jonsen. The Finn was apparently not yet satisfied,—he desired that some one at Heggelund's should first read it, that he might be sure of the contents.

Stuwitz now seated himself with remarkable humil-

ity to write another letter ; his hands trembled, and he stopped several times as if he thought of the possibility of escaping. The Finn meantime looked on, blinking ; he enjoyed the triumph of having caught him.

After some time Mathis came down to the shop again, where Stuwitz anxiously sat and waited, for he had feared that the Finn would not keep his word ; and then the latter honestly produced the notes, but, sure enough, he persisted that each of the rix dollars was worth a *specie* dollar (\$1.20) in the new notes, and Stuwitz was obliged to satisfy him.

That day Andreas sat in the parlor talking with his consin. Edel was very bright, and apparently quite of his mind in the old dispute that the real culture of the land was only possessed by the students. She had, to be sure, said something which he did not know whether to take as a joke or not. He twirled his handsome black moustache for a moment, but her guileless look put him at ease. She remarked, as if confirming his opinion :

“ Yes, I well remember how glad we all were when you became a gentleman, Andreas ” ; but quickly corrected herself by — “ when you took your examination, Andreas.”

At that moment word came in that a mountain Finn stood outside in the hall and wished to speak with Andreas. It was old Mathis Nutto, whom he had known by sight in former days. The Finn stood

with a paper in his hand, which he asked him to read;—he wished to hear if the contents were right.

Andreas had scarcely read it when he rushed into the room with the news that Morten Jonsen was saved after all;—here was black and white for it, he said, and was rushing up to his uncle in the same hurry.

Then he saw, to his surprise, that Edel grew pale, and stretched out her hand to look at the paper. After having read it through twice, and then again, she looked gloriously happy upon him and said, as if with a sudden feeling of thankfulness :

“ Since you have brought me this news, Andreas, you shall be the first to know that Morten Jonsen and I are engaged,— still he is not a gentleman, Andreas ! ” she added, somewhat roguishly ; but her eyes were full of tears, and she went herself with the paper to her father.

The Finn had no time to be honored, and was obliged to go down to the shop immediately to Stuwitz,— he only desired to hear the paper read.

Mathis Nutto returned much pleased. He pulled up to Jon Zachariasen’s landing and gave the letter to Marina, telling her the contents. It was a return, he he said, as he hurried on, for the rescue of his daughter and her child from the skerry ; “ but,” he shouted back, as a last word, “ if you lose the paper your son will lose Finn Point ! ”

Marina also hurried down to the Point, and came there quite out of breath.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD STORIES.

STUWITZ, after his conduct toward Heggelund, was looked upon with disfavor through the district. Whether it was to change public opinion in his favor, or because he really thought to quiet his conscience by "good deeds," or in part both, he had at all events gone to the court that fall for the purpose of making his will, in which some money, at his death, was to go as a legacy for the benefit of the community.

During the evening the interest of the court was excited by an incident which was related concerning the "old Counselor" at Heggelund's. By the wreck of a vessel north in Finmark, in his younger days, his brother, who sailed the ship, together with his wife and their only child, were wrecked. The authorities had at the time instituted many inquiries concerning the vessel, about the fate of which there was some suspicion. In an ornament which the trader Morten Jonsen had presented his lady-love, Miss Heggelund, he now recognized the same breastpin which he had himself presented his brother's wife. It was remark-

able that this pin should really have been found on the clothes of a child saved from a wreck, and this child was Morten Jonsen's mother.

The persons concerned were known, and it awakened a peculiar sensation to think of such a romance transpiring in their immediate vicinity. One of the company present reminded them of similar incidents occurring some years earlier; but the interest for these was more remote, and the conversation soon turned back again to all sorts of surmises and conjectures upon the matter.

Dean Muller sat silent, listening during the conversation, now and then drying his face with his handkerchief. Suddenly he said, in a strikingly solemn voice, turning to Stuwitz, who had taken no part in the conversation:

"I always pray for those who do not dare acknowledge what they carry on their conscience, for they, I know, have the worst of it in this world!"

Stuwitz became quite ashy in the face, and soon after disappeared.

The recognition of the breastpin happened in this wise: Edel had one Sunday, in the way which she was wont to speak with Uncle Tobias, shown him the new breastpin she wore. She looked from it to him, and was astonished at his behavior. He turned the ornament in his hand, gazed at and scrutinized it in every way, and at last, by sliding a

plate aside, which she had not known of, a little lock of hair was discovered. The old man seemed to be utterly overwhelmed, and sat for a long time lost in thought.

It was — he at last said, so choked with emotion that he could scarcely utter a word — the same breast-pin which he had once given his brother's wife. The lock was his brother's hair; he had, as he remembered, himself engraved his initials "T. St." on the inside of the plate.

Now came explanations, in which Edel told him what she had come to know about the pin, and then she left the old man — as he apparently desired it — to sit alone with it.

When she came to him again later, he said in his broken way:

"Remarkable! — remarkable! I always thought that Morten Jonsen reminded me so of my brother — so light, and especially the eyes — and the same outspoken manners — and they always said that my brother had developed in his growth just what I lacked."

Later in the evening, he said with animation:

"I shall be glad to be at the wedding, Edel! — if I am well enough; and now you must write all about it to your lover, and I will add a few lines to my *niece*." He laid a peculiar stress upon the word by which he designated Marina. "She or her children

shall some time inherit my part of the legacy," he remarked the day after.

No one would disturb the old man by explaining to him how slight legal proof they had in the matter. To speak of "his relatives" seemed from this time to be the favorite topic of Uncle Tobias.

In his later years, Stawitz became crippled on one side, and disagreeable stories of his uncleanliness and hatred of mankind were told.

When Dean Muller was called to his lonely bed, he saw that our Master had already long since "overtaken" the man.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONCLUSION.

THAT Edel and Morten should have been engaged at the time when everything looked impossible, and hedged in with difficulties for his son, had had the effect of raising her in Jon's eyes; at all events, he did not speak of her longer to Marina as the "fine miss." But he still felt some compunction. A wife was needed, surely, down at Finn Point; but as to the advantage that a daughter of the gentleman Heggelund would be in directing affairs, he had great doubt. In his ill-humor he was on the point of deciding that since she had caused so much misfortune while outside, it was impossible to say what would not come when she was in the house! She would, naturally, have everything in the style to which she had been accustomed.

Jon and Marina had latterly, on pressing invitations, been several times on a visit at Heggelund's. They always came in their Sunday best, and insisted upon returning again in the afternoon,—they had a remarkable tact in preserving their *amour propre*. But there was no less finesse hidden under the manner in which Edel was able to influence her lover's

father. It seemed as if she divined his thoughts concerning her.

Morten and Edel felt a new consciousness of having let the years slip past them, and that they must make amends therefor. If they were united in anything, it was that they would thereafter build their future together, so far as it lay in their power. In the beginning they would not find it easy, for they must make great sacrifices to pay Stuwitz; but it was fortunate that Finn Point was in so good a position that this could be done. He desired that she should go home with him as his wife that same spring, but Edel had said, in Jon's presence, that she needed more time; and when Morten, somewhat surprised, asked, "For what?" she replied:

"Do you think, then, I am going in state with you to Finn Point? There are many things in such a household which I need to learn, if I am to be of any use to you."

Jon thought she talked more sensibly than Morten. But the son had his way in appointing the wedding for midsummer, after the first trip of the sloops to Bergen.

Edel had gradually won over Jon to such a degree that the latter signified his belief that the cause of all the mishaps at Finn Point was on account of her absence. "Morten would never have been so rash with her near him," he remarked to Marina; "and

she is not the person to have permitted such things. She is a sensible girl."

It was a glorious summer day out at Skorpen. The sea outside was a fine blue in the sun. The mountains far and near—the great Storberg among those nearest—glittered in the varied azure tints and tones of the summer haze, and the narrow clefts and valleys were truly warm mines of compressed sun, which suddenly, as by magic, brought out a surprising vegetation from every plot of earth. The spring had been unusually late that year, but in a few days had broken forth with such power that the ridges of snow in the valleys were lifted by the upspringing fresh grass.

Jon Zachariasen's little cabin, out by the sea, was in unusual splendor. The yard in front was carefully cultivated; old green panes of glass were no longer to be seen, and it looked quite festive, with its birch branches at the door; the dandelions and short, bunchy grass on the turf roof, in whose one corner a small, leafy, dwarf birch flourished, like a picture of the owner's own weather-beaten life,—seemed a little strange in this unwonted splendor. There was no one at home, and the door was closed, but through the even, clear window-panes the sun shone in its loveliness, making two round, yellow frames just upon the old beam inside, and illuminated the first and last of the letters.

Jon and Marina, with their children, were absent at their son's wedding, which had been celebrated two days previous at Heggelund's, and they were expected home with the bridal pair that day.

There were not many guests at the wedding, as they had determined to make no outlay, but that it should be quiet and simple. Jomfru Dyring, however, who was beaming and grand that day, as if a ray of her house-mother's spirit rested upon her, had not been able to keep fully to this decision. She was now the woman representative of the house, which was to be the home of her old age, and could not find it consistent with its dignity if the table had displayed fewer dishes now than when the sister was married.

But happiness in the true signification of the word had reigned. The old beam had also been present at the feast. Dean Muller had lifted his glass in its honor.

"On a sprung, sea-beaten timber," he said, "which had lain in a wreck and been overgrown with slimy weeds, God had written upon the wall of a little cabin the promise of a future which had been wonderfully fulfilled. After a hard battle in life, she who, once a helpless child, was stranded upon it, was now an honored and happy mother, and read its characters painted upon the stern of her son's new sloop." Turning to Uncle Tobias, he concluded:

“This old man, whose lost family have been his sorrow and longing, is not the one least happy in our midst; for it is the highest earthly blessing of the aged man when it is granted him to see a future in his posterity. But the reason for the birth of this beam in a new ship is,—that our Lord has guided it.”

To this toast Jon Zachariasen, in his simple, country fashion, gave an “Amen.”

Into the bay at Skorpen that fine day sailed a couple of gay ten-oared boats, which were received with salutes from several places along shore.

In the first boat sat the bride and bridegroom with his parents, Jon Zachariasen and Marina, as well as Uncle Tobias, and on the seat near them Elias Rost, who had insisted upon rowing the couple. Andreas Heggelund was also with them. In the other boat, among others, Morten’s brother Eilert and his handsome sister Christine were noticeable.

Beside the buildings on Finn Point, which pertained to the business, there stood higher up on the hill a one-storied building with large clear window-panes. It was still finished and furnished only on one side; but what they did not have could come. Back of all stood the mountain with its fringe of deciduous trees. The Finns had that year, as usual, driven their deer up to the ridge.

The large, newly-painted warehouse came suddenly into view at the turn of the Point, and just outside the bay lay Morten Jonsen's yacht, "The Future," and saluted with its flags.

Then Elias Rost dropped his sail; those in the other boat did the same, and glided toward them.

Elias Rost drew a long piece of paper from the breast-pocket of his jacket. Marking the measure of the verse with his foot, he read a poem to the bridal couple. It was written in large characters, with imposing black letters at the commencement of each verse, and was as follows:

A large smack at full sail is a beautiful sight,
As it plows through the sea when the wind is "just right,"
And the man at the helm looks before him.
Yes, when land-points and capes fast as arrows past spin,
Then rejoice must the fishermen sitting therein,
Though the billows dash drenchingly o'er him.

Yes, a smack on the sea is so little a shell,
While the billows dash o'er it like mount and like dell,
And the breakers and storm it is breasting.
There is rowing, though seamen full weary may be;
There is sailing, though gunwale is touching the sea—
How it speeds without easing or resting!

But a yacht with full sails is a glorious sight,
When it speeds to the town loaded half the mast's height,
With the fruits of the long winter's rowing;
When it anchoring flags in the bay it has sought,
Since all things have home into safety been brought,
And of wealth there is plenty now flowing.

And in each little home, where a hearthfire did burn,
 There was also a flame in the heart that did yearn
 For work, and was happy in toiling.
 And the fisher who strives, with his wife who trows
 His parish and land to a safe future, rows
 While the breakers around him are boiling.

A large smack at full sail comes as brisk as a bee ;
 It bears a young couple back home o'er the sea,
 And how well the clear water reflects it !
 But his boat has been tested where breakers do roar,
 And the captain on board has been tested still more —
 With care and with skill he protects it.

Then joy be with Finnaze, with bridegroom and bride —
 If you always look out to keep God on your side,
 The future will crown you with glory.
 May the yacht ev'ry year bring in wealth to your shore ;
 That which now is begun, may it grow more and more,
 And make a beautiful story !

The beam still remains in the little cabin, where
 the two old people live, with no desire of moving.
 Jon Zachariasen and Marina enjoy there a peaceful
 old age.

Morten Jonsen on Finn Point is called one of the
 cleverest and most substantial business-men in the
 far north, and his place, now much more extended,
 is visited by the steamers regularly. There live a
 happy couple with several children, and Edel has
 the reputation of being an excellent housewife.

Now and then Andreas Heggelund comes to them
 on a visit, and he is treated with all the attention
 possible. He will scarcely become "Judge," but is

unusually successful as a lawyer. Morten Jonsen cherishes his old weakness for him, and no mean proportion of Andreas' business is due to his influence.

In the beginning, Andreas went every year to Tromso, where he enjoyed appearing in his old foppish manner, but there he met Julie Schultz oftener, and it resulted in their marriage. He is fully persuaded that she is his first and only love, and his wife believes it; — but she, nevertheless, lets him go to Tromso only when absolutely necessary.

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